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Hafa Adai!

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CUC cuts power to IPI barracks

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

» Sablan says it's shameful and totally unacceptable

From cutting power to the casino in Garapan, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has now cut power to the different housing properties of Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC on Saipan, leaving many IPI employees living in these sites without working air-conditioners and refrigerators.

A copy of IPI management's internal memorandum for all employee housing residents issued last Tuesday showed that power was disconnected at the Miller Estates, Brown House, Lucy's Apartment, Tanapag Dormitory, and Chalan Laulau Dormitory.

The memorandum assured IPI employees who are affected by the power disconnection that IPI management is "working closely" with CUC to have the power reconnected soon.

As of press time yesterday,

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RELATED NEWS

- Contractor wants to seize IPI's $5.65M in banks today. **PAGE 2**
- O'Connor law firm out as IPI counsel in 2 suits, but stays in 1 suit. **PAGE 6**

NMC to start demolitions for new campus

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Northern Marianas College will soon move to demolishing the many buildings that Super Typhoon Yutu severely damaged in 2018, to make way for a brand new campus the college is building in As Terlaje.

According to NMC interim president Frankie Eliptico, NMC is working to complete the demolition of damaged building by the end of this

See NMC on Page 4

Saipan's testing rate at 10%

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

As of yesterday, May 27, and based on the assumption that the CNMI population stands at 50,000, 10% of Saipan's population has already taken advantage of the free mass testing for COVID-19 at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport.

Esther Muña, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer, stated that Saipan is currently at a 10%

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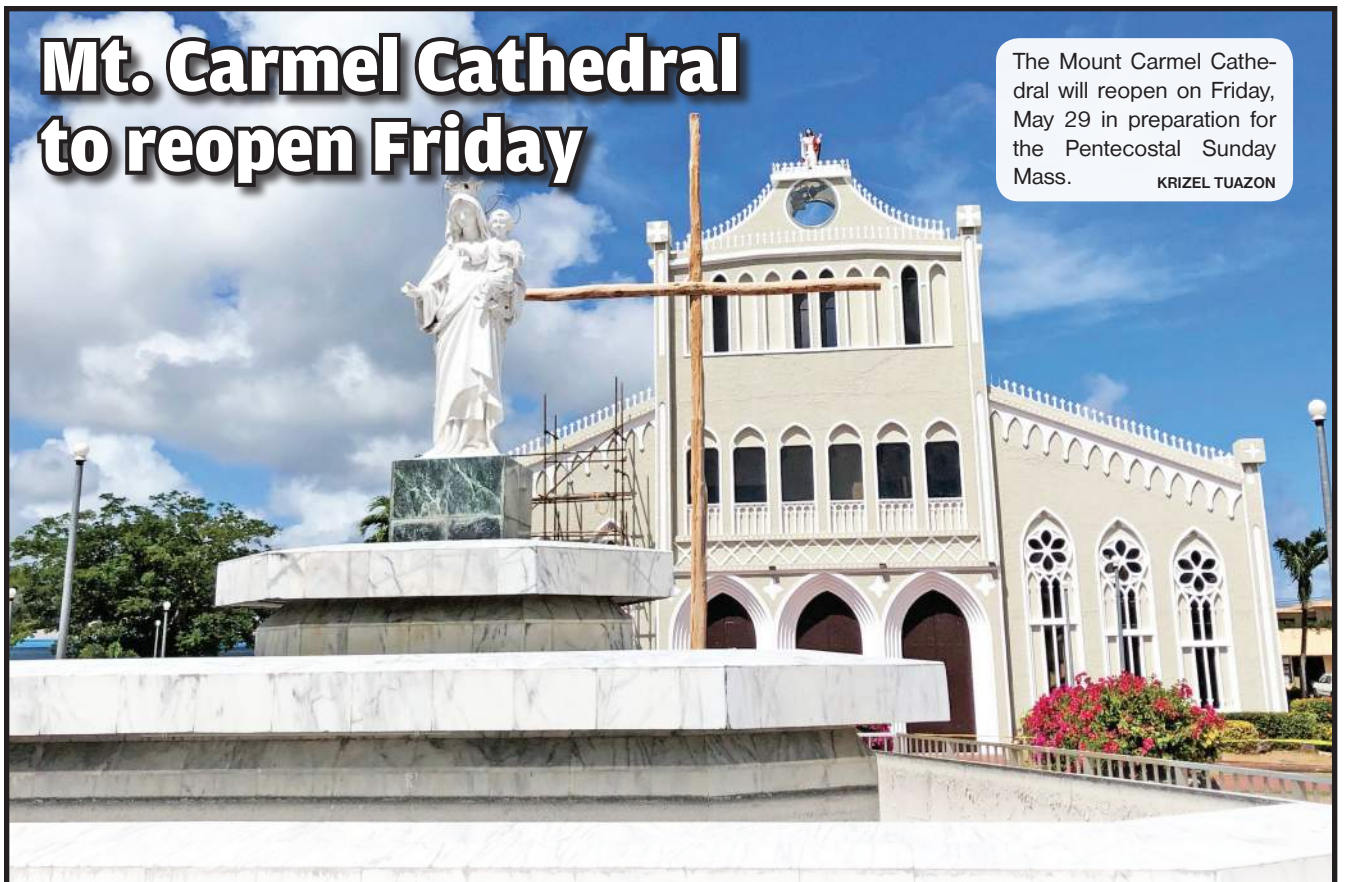

Mt. Carmel Cathedral to reopen Friday

The Mount Carmel Cathedral will reopen on Friday, May 29 in preparation for the Pentecostal Sunday Mass. KRIZEL TUAZON

By IVA MAURIN
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

On Friday, May 29, the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa will reopen the Mount Carmel Cathedral in preparation for the Pentecostal Sunday Mass.

This will be the first time the church will be welcoming the faithful back physically, following the recent directive released by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres allowing church services to resume, on the condition that attendance will be limited to 25% of the allowed occupancy of the

See CARMEL on Page 4

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

YELLOW

- Business hours: 5am - 9pm
- Curfew hours: 11pm - 5am
- Gyms open
- Mañagaha open
- Public parks closed
- Restaurants: Dine-in OK; 25% only
- Church services OK; 25% only
- Public beaches, pathway closed
- Casino, poker, e-gaming closed

LEGEND:

- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

AT A GLANCE

As of 5pm, May 27, 2020

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	167	3	170
Recovered	139	4	143
Active	20	2	22
Deaths	6*	0	6*

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	22	0	22
Recovered	13	0	13
Active	7	0	7
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested**			5,200

*Total includes a sailor from the USS *Theodore Roosevelt.*

**Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

INSIDE

BUSINESS
Triple J Rentals assures that its Hertz business as usual in Micronesia.
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NATION
The known U.S. death toll from the coronavirus pandemic is fast approaching 100,000.
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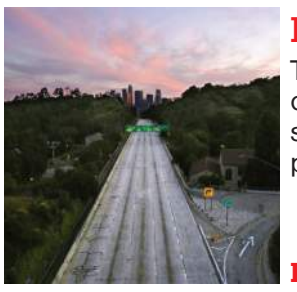

ENVIRONMENT
The world cut its daily carbon dioxide emissions by 17% at the peak of the pandemic.
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SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

Local

Contractor wants to seize IPI's $5.65M in banks today

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Pacific Rim Land Development LLC applied with the federal court yesterday a writ of execution to seize $5.65 million that Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC may have in several banks in the CNMI.

Pacific Rim, through lawyer Colin M. Thompson, requested the U.S. District Court for the NMI to issue the writ of execution that would direct the U.S. Marshal to seize money owned or controlled by IPI from the Bank of Saipan, City Trust Bank, Bank of Guam, and First Hawaiian Bank, to be held in the court's registry or account.

Last April 27, Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona entered a judgment in favor of Pacific Rim in the amount of $5.65 million against IPI.

Thompson

Thompson said IPI has not obtained an order staying or suspending execution on the judgment, that the automatic stay expired yesterday, May 27. He said the judgment remains unsatisfied in its entirety as IPI has not paid any sum against the judgment. The lawyer asked the court that the writs of execution take effect and be served by the U.S. Marshal today, Thursday.

Last Tuesday, Manglona denied without prejudice IPI's request to shorten time to hear IPI's motion to stay or suspend execution of the court's $6.8 million judgment in favor of IPI's former contractor, Pacific Rim, pending resolution of IPI's appeal of that ruling. Denial without prejudice means the court does not prohibit IPI from raising the same issue in the future. Shortening time refers to a court's order in response to a motion of a party to a lawsuit that allows setting a legal matter at a time shorter than provided by law or court rules.

IPI, through counsel Michael W. Dotts, filed last Friday a notice of motion to shorten time. In denying the motion, Manglona said IPI's request is not a stipulation and contains no statement certifying IPI's efforts to resolve the dispute without court action.

IPI wants the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit to reverse Manglona's order last April 23 for IPI to pay Pacific Rim $6.8 million, including the principal amount of $5,650,000, for breach of contract.

Pacific Rim is suing IPI and five unnamed alleged co-conspirators for breach of contract (construction and promissory note), and unjust enrichment, saying it has already completed its work on the casino project last Sept. 30, 2018.

Dotts said denying the stay pending appeal will force IPI to permanently shut down and will leave 1,066 people on Saipan without jobs.

According to court records, Pacific Rim agreed to build a hotel-casino complex for IPI in Garapan but eventually stopped work because it claims that IPI did not pay it the amounts owed under the contract.

IPI has also filed suit against Pacific Rim for promissory fraud, fraud in the inducement as to the promissory note, violation of Consumer Protection Act, and breach of contract.

Last March 17, IPI closed its casino to comply with Gov. Ralph DLG. Torres' directive due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

JKPL reopens by appointment

The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library has been open since Tuesday, albeit for limited public service and by appointment only. This is intended to ensure the health and safety of staff and library users and to comply with the government's COVID-19 emergency directives.

The operation hours will be from Tuesday to Friday, 9am-4pm. To schedule an appointment, call 235-7322/7323 (READ).

Public service will include general circulation services and limited computer access to 45 minutes per visit. However, curbside service will still continue to those who prefer to pick up materials outside the library.

Appointment services will include circulation services, computer and printing services, and curbside pickup.

Circulation service will be limited to 10 patrons per visit for 30 minutes, by appointment only.

Virtual services could also be accessed. The free WiFi access point parking lot is available during library hours of operation and WiFi password will be issued one per vehicle. E-book access could be accessed by visiting www.cnmilib.org.

"We…thank you for your continued partnership, support, patience, and understanding during our temporary facility closure. We appreciate your patronage, as we look forward to continuing to serve your informational needs," said the staff and management of JKPL.

For the latest news and events, visit the website at www.cnmilib.org. Check out their social media page on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. ***(Chevy Alipio)***

File photo shows the forecourt of the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library in Susupe.
KRIZEL TUAZON

Crisostomo's request to delay hearing is denied

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Superior Court has denied a defendant's request to postpone the hearing on the revocation of his bail as his lawyer at the Office of the Public Defender will be unable to attend.

In an order on Thursday, Associate Judge Teresa K. Kim-Tenorio said she finds it reasonable that if the attorney from the OPD who is assigned to the case against Calistro Crisostomo is unable to attend the hearing, another attorney from the office may do so.

Furthermore, in filing the motion to continue hearing, an exact reason is not provided as to why the current counsel assigned to the matter will be unable to attend, Kim-Tenorio said, only that "unfortunately, defense counsel will be unavailable to appear."

Instead of providing a reason, defense counsel asks the court to reschedule this matter based on counsel's availability, she added.

Kim-Tenorio said counsel should know by now that absent special/extenuating circumstances, she hears criminal matters on Tuesday afternoons.

However, she said, in proving alternate days when counsel will be available (May 27 to 29 and June 2 to 4), only one of the six days suggested is a Tuesday. Kim-Tenorio said this essentially leaves her at the whim of defense counsel and without room to maneuver.

"And seeing as no such special/extenuating circumstances have been asserted by defendant's counsel in requesting this continuance, the court is disinclined to do so," the judge said.

On Sept. 18, 2019, Crisostomo was released on bail to third-party custodians, with terms and conditions of release to include no consumption or possession of alcohol and to obey all Commonwealth laws.

The Office of the Attorney General, however, alleges that on May 4, 2020, Crisostomo committed the offenses of assault and battery, and disturbing the peace, as well as consumed alcohol.

Crisostomo, through the PDO, asked the court to postpone his revocation of bail hearing that was set last Tuesday because the defense counsel most familiar with the matter will be unable to appear.

In the government's opposition, assistant attorney general Heather P. Barcinas said the allegations made against Crisostomo as justification to revoke his pre-trial release involve a complaint of violent nature. Barcinas said not only is Crisostomo facing revocation of his probation in two previous criminal cases, but is also facing a maximum penalty of 11 years on felony and misdemeanor charges, and now further faces additional charges. She said Crisostomo is a danger to the community and the court should deny delaying the hearing.

The prosecutor noted that the court should be aware that Crisostomo posted the $2,000 cash bail in his new case last May 15, without a third-party custodian and without any supervision.

Barcinas said the government intends to provide testimony to disqualify the current third-party custodians as they are not suitable.

GOVERNMENT UPDATES

CCDF suspends accepting new applications

The Child Care and Development Fund Program announces the temporary suspension of accepting new applications of families to be placed on the wait list. Both the CCDF and Child Care Licensing Program are in the planning process of establishing health and safety protocols to return eligible children safely to child care.

Information and updates regarding child care services will be posted in the Child Care Licensing Program's website at cnmiclp.gov.mp.

You may contact the CCDF eligibility specialists at 664-2575/2576 for inquiries related to parent and children requirements. For information on how to apply to be a child care provider, contact Gordon Salas, Child Care Licensing Program supervisor, at 783-8599 or email at gbsdccacclp@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

New office hours for BMV, HSO, and Firearms and Records

The CNMI Department of Public Safety's Bureau of Motor Vehicle, Highway Safety Office, and the Firearms and Records office will now be open to serve the public

Monday to Friday, excluding holidays. Office hours are as follows:

Bureau of Motor Vehicle

- **8am - 11am:** document drop-off for vehicle and/or watercraft registration renewal
- **8am - 11am:** -walk-in for driver's license renewal
- **8am - 11am:** -updated document(s) pick-up

BMV will be accepting incoming documents and will be processing these documents for next-day pick-up.

BMV continues to process driver's licenses and vehicle/watercraft registrations. The driver's exam and driving tests are currently postponed until further notice. Drivers who are currently holding a learner's permit are asked to remain patient as the office is working on finding an alternative and safe option for the tests to be carried out in a safe manner.

To prevent the machines from overheating and to prevent premature machine failure the BMV office will be processing a maximum of 50 driver's license prints per day.

For more information related to BMV, call 664-9066.

Highway Safety Office

- **9am – 12pm:** for walk-in services

For all inquiries related to the Child Restraint Purchase Assistance Program and the Highway Safety Office, call 664-9121 /9125 or /9131.

Firearms and Records Office

- **9am – 3pm:** for walk-in services

For all inquiries related to the DPS Firearms and Records office, call 664-9072.

All individuals who are looking to visit the offices and avail of the services are required to wear a mask and maintain the standard six-feet distance while lining up outside the offices and while around other individuals.

We ask individuals to make payments at the CNMI Superior Court in Susupe, CNMI Treasury on Capital Hill, or Revenue and Tax in Dandan before turning in documents, as the BMV cashiers window remains closed. ***(PR)***

Case vs inmate in alleged stabbing of barber is dismissed

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Superior Court granted yesterday the Office of the Attorney General's motion to dismiss the case against an inmate who allegedly assaulted and stabbed a barber at the Department of Corrections in Susupe.

Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho dismissed the case against 46-year-old Kennedy Masubed without prejudice, saying the matter is still under investigation. This means the OAG can re-file the case in the future.

With the case's dismissal, Camacho said the issue whether the OAG must provide a complaint with an affidavit for probable cause is now moot and the case's July 8, 2020, motion hearing is also vacated.

In the government's motion filed yesterday, assistant attorney general Erin Toolan said the Commonwealth moves to dismiss to allow additional investigation by the Department of Public Safety and Department of Corrections Internal Affairs.

Camacho earlier ruled that a broken toothbrush, which was described by police as the hand-made knife that was allegedly used by Masubed in stabbing the barber, is not known as this time if it was even used in the alleged assault. This were among the findings that Camacho discussed in his amended order that found no probable cause to charge Masubed with assault with a dangerous weapon. Camacho has already dismissed that charge without prejudice. That means the OAG can re-file the charge if the police or the OAG have more information or evidence to support the charge. Camacho pointed out that there was no blood on the toothbrush handle and that there was a very small bruise on the barber's head. No further information was provided to the court about the medical treatment the alleged victim received, Camacho said.

Camacho, however, found probable cause to charge Masubed with assault and battery.

Police said Masubed beat up and stabbed with a handmade knife the barber who had just cut his hair inside DOC last May 7. Masubed allegedly admitted to the assault because the barber was gay, police said.

Police said the barber had stab wounds on the top of his head and left temple and was brought to the Commonwealth Health Center for treatment.

The barber would regularly go to at DOC to give haircuts to inmates.

Police said a "shank" or a handmade knife was later seized from Masubed.

Rota to boost agriculture, fishing

Rota farmers are looking to boost their agriculture and assist local fishermen and farmers on island through a new non-profit group called Rota Island Specialty Crop Association or RISCA.

The group was appropriated $100,000, through Rota Local Law 21-2, introduced by Sen. Paul A. Manglona (Ind-Rota), and signed into law last February. Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig informed the senator of the complete transfer of the full funds in a letter last May 14.

"We appreciate [the Department of Finance's] assistance in setting up a special local account for this appropriation so that [these] funds can be utilized immediately for RISCA's fishing and agricultural programs. Now, more than ever, we should promote our local agriculture and fishing industry," said Manglona.

The expenditure authority for RISCA is its current president, Jude Arriola.

"The COVID-19 crisis has brought renewed attention to not only the critical importance of food production but also to the economic system of our small island," Manglona said.

The senator reached out to Division of Agriculture director Jack Ogumoro last Tuesday to request for assistance for the new non-profit, in particular to share his experience as well as the division's programs that would benefit Rota's farmers and fishers.

"I understand that your office has been the recipient of Specialty Crop Block Grant from [the U.S. Department of Agriculture] over the past several years and have been very successful in enhancing and promoting specialty crops (fruits, vegetable, tree nuts, etc.) through your division's education and outreach programs on Saipan," said Manglona's letter to Ogumoro. "We hope you can share your experience and agricultural programs with the members of RISCA. I am sure we all agree that now, more than ever, we should promote our local agriculture industry." he added.

Manglona expressed appreciation to the officers and members of RISCA, stressing that aside from ensuring food sustainability, agriculture and fishing activities also provide job opportunities. ***(Iva Maurin)***

Board OKs $90.3M budget for CUC in fiscal year 2021

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. board of directors approved yesterday CUC's proposed $90,380,000 budget for fiscal year 2021, or a significant 30.41% decrease from its fiscal year 2020 budget of $129,883,000.

In a regular board meeting held via video conference, all five members approved the budget. Present were board chair Miranda V. Manglona, vice chair Weston Deleon Guerrero, Commonwealth Development Authority chair Ignacio Perez, and directors Matthew Holley and Jovita Paulino.

In a later interview, CUC executive director Gary P. Camacho said it's a very limited budget, considering the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy. "Our numbers are as realistic as possible. And I'm glad we made some final adjustments to add a little bit more to maintenance," Camacho said. He said maintenance is obviously essential because a lot has been deferred due to some of the accounts that have not been paid for years. "Those are affecting our ability to continue to perform maintenance in the matter we want to or we need to do," he said.

Although they got a little bit more for maintenance, he said they still need to get some of those deferred accounts so they can re-invest in their system and ensure that they provide reliable service.

Camacho said the item mostly affected by the budget reduction is maintenance but "we had to do that because you have to understand our anticipated revenues."

He said they need to maintain operations and stay within the budget. "It's our projected revenues that we need to stay focused on and continue to pursue upgrades, and not only upgrades but maintenance," Camacho said.

For fiscal year 2019, CUC's total budget was $122,190,340, which was less than a 1% increase over 2018's approved budget.

The bulk of CUC's expenditures usually lie with the Power Division, which includes power generation and power transmission and distribution.

Teachers may not receive summer pay

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Teachers who were furloughed due to the COVID-19 pandemic may not receive their summer pay because it could conflict with federal aid.

In an interview with Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada, since furloughed personnel will remain furloughed until Aug. 1, there is a possibility that teachers may not receive their summer pay.

Ada said PSS is waiting on a legal opinion from the CNMI Department of Labor whether summer pay is considered income or not. If the summer pay is considered income, teachers who are owed that summer pay under their 190-day contract with PSS may not qualify for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance or Federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance.

If teachers receive PUA or FPUA and also receive their summer pay, Ada fears that it might be considered fraudulent activity.

Ada explained that if summer pay is considered income by DOL, teachers and staff will not qualify for PUA since summer pay is disbursed like regular payrolls throughout the summer break.

"We are awaiting the legal opinion from the Department of Labor because it's summer pay. It's money that's supposed to go to the teachers but there's a difference of opinion that it is considered an income wage. If we release the summer pay, it's going to be considered income, even though that was owed to them according to their contract because they're on a 190-day teaching contract," he said.

According to Marianas High School teacher Jeremy Rother, most of the furloughed teachers are expecting unemployment benefits from PUA and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation programs and lifting the furlough would make them ineligible for this aid.

"If PSS employees remain on furlough, most of us can expect more money for the furlough period from unemployment assistance programs, and a more financially robust PSS going into next school year. If the furlough is lifted, PSS can expect less money for that same period and more financial uncertainty for PSS employees, students, and families we serve," Rother said.

Corrections staff and inmates all test negative

Corrections Commissioner Wally F. Villagomez announced Wednesday that all employees, officers, and inmates of the CNMI Department of Corrections have tested negative for COVID-19.

According to Villagomez, DOC employees took the initiative by registering for testing when the community-based testing initiative began operations.

"I am truly proud to say that the Department of Corrections' employees have all tested negative for COVID-19. DOC further took steps and initiated communication with the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. and approval by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres to conduct testing on all inmates. We are pleased to report that all inmates have tested negative for COVID-19," said Villagomez.

As part of its ongoing initiative to reach out to vulnerable and at-risk populations, CHCC collaborated with DOC to collect specimens from over 100 inmates and staff for testing.

"Inmates are among the most vulnerable populations that can be infected with COVID-19, and since we had implemented the community-based testing, we collaborated with DOC to bring the testing to them. On May 14, our nurses collected 166 specimens from DOC, which included the inmates and staff," said CHCC chief executive officer Esther L. Muña.

Responding to concerns raised by media partners and community members, Villagomez now assures that the CNMI Department of Corrections is 100% COVID-19-free. "The hard work and effort contributed by the officers and employees of the Department of Corrections, in collaboration with the Department of Public Safety, Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, CHCC, other government agencies, and the COVID-19 Task Force, under the leadership of the governor and lieutenant governor…prove that we are 'Marianas strong,'" he said.

"We are squashing COVID-19, and the governor's executive orders and emergency operations have significantly addressed preparedness, prevention and control of COVID-19," he added. ***(PR)***

NMC

From Page 1

summer. The demolition is expected to take place while summer classes are online so there will be minimal impact on students and employees.

Eliptico said he hopes the demolition will be completed before the fall semester begins in August.

Currently, the college is working on securing the necessary permits from regulatory agencies, including the Historic Preservation Office.

As for the new facilities NMC plans to build, Eliptico said the design focuses on increased capacity to withstand natural disasters like Super Typhoon Yutu. "They will have a resilient design and will incorporate technological elements to reflect some of the lessons we've learned from typhoons and the current pandemic," he said.

Eliptico said that this is to ensure a seamless transition in case another natural disaster or pandemic forces NMC students to return to remote learning. "So the next time we have a pandemic or a typhoon, our classes will be held from a remote site or from other places. There will be a seamless transition [from in-person to online classes]," he said.

Eliptico added that the current COVID-19 pandemic is an opportunity to come up with better designs. "It's not a great thing that this pandemic happened, but it's giving us an opportunity to apply the lessons we have learned in the design of the new buildings," he added.

NMC has secured construction funds from federal sources, such as $21.9 million from the U.S. Department of Education, and is continuing to pursue other funding opportunities.

CUC

From Page 1

Saipan Tribune was still waiting for IPI's comments about the disconnection and how much the company owes CUC.

When asked yesterday, CUC executive director Gary P. Camacho declined to disclose how much IPI owes and for how many months the company is behind in payments. "Customers have the right to privacy. That's like you don't want me talking about your accounts, unless you want me to," Camacho said.

Saipan Tribune learned that since there are no generators at these properties, employees, including those living with their children, have no power and water supply.

In a statement yesterday, Rep. Tina Sablan (Ind-Saipan) said that, with IPI failing to pay its utility bills for its company housing, the CNMI now has on its hands "a humanitarian and public health crisis" affecting IPI employees and their families, including children.

Sablan said there is no generator so there is no power or water. "Their food is going bad, and they can't use their bathrooms," she said, yet even as IPI employees and their families "are suffering in unsanitary and inhumane conditions, IPI continues with construction and its pursuit of other projects."

Sablan said there is money for some things, but maintaining essential services necessary for healthy and sanitary conditions at company housing seems to not be a priority. "This is shameful, and totally unacceptable," she added.

Sablan has asked the leadership in the House of Representatives to hold a hearing with IPI and the Commonwealth Casino Commission. Sablan said she has also been reaching out to CCC as well as IPI management.

The lawmaker said she has notified the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. about the problem and that CHCC replied that they're sending an environmental health team to check on the matter.

"There is a serious problem here. We are still in a public health emergency, and intolerable conditions at IPI company housing must be resolved as soon as possible," she added.

IPI has admitted that it is currently in a financially precarious situation, has experienced difficulty even paying its electricity bills, has had trouble meeting its payroll, and is likely to shut down.

Last May 19, CUC cut electric power to IPI's casino in Garapan and at IPI's office at Vestcor on Capital Hill for non-payment of bills. Camacho earlier stated that power will be reconnected after IPI pays its bills.

CARMEL

From Page 1

church, and with strict social distancing and sanitation observed.

In a statement, Rev. Ryan P. Jimenez, D.D., the bishop of the Chalan Kanoa diocese, said the restrictions on the number of people inside churches are limited not only to public Masses but also to funerals and weddings. Physical distancing between parishioners and the wearing of masks will also be strictly implemented.

"This health crisis continues to be very serious and all of us are requested to do our part in ensuring that its spread in our community is mitigated. Specific guidelines and restrictions will be released by your respective parishes and pastors," said Jiminez in a message to the other parishes under the CK diocese.

Sunday Masses at the cathedral will still be livestreamed and broadcasted. Other parish gatherings will remain suspended.

"I also thank our government and health officials for all their efforts to keep our community safe as well for their valuable collaboration with the church as we slowly open for public worship. Let us continue to pray for every member of our community," Jimenez added.

In a separate interview, the governor disclosed that he has spoken with the bishop about opening up the diocese.

"The bishop has been anxious to open up our church, and so is our faith base and other churches. But again, we have to always be mindful that when we open, whether it's the church, or a restaurant, the regulation is still there," Torres added.

He said each church will have to do their own assessment in terms of implementing social distancing and sanitation protocols. "There will be some changes in attending the Mass. …We need to practice the regulations as much as we can. If everybody does their own share of that, we'll move forward, quicker," he added.

TESTING

From Page 1

testing rate for COVID-19, which is higher than almost all jurisdictions in the United States.

"Right now, our current testing rate is at 10% for Saipan, and if we can reach the same [number] for Rota and Tinian, then that's a good number [because] it is high than almost all the jurisdictions in the United States on the percentage of testing based on population," said Muña.

This means, she said, that the CNMI has done a tremendous job with encouraging the community to get tested since previous cases have shown up through contact tracing and/or the community-based testing.

Muña hopes to reach the same rate for both Tinian and Rota and, with the current data that's provided by the CHCC's official website, both islands appear to be heading in the same direction.

The U.S. Census' last count in 2016, as provided by the CNMI Department of Commerce, shows that Rota's population is about 2,635 and Tinian is about 3,056.

CHCC's official website's data shows that 326 individuals out of 2,635 on Rota have been tested for COVID-19 and 234 individuals out of 3,056 have been tested for COVID-19 on Tinian.

Additionally, Muña stated that should the CNMI open its boarders on July 15, the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, CHCC, and the governor's authorized representative will be coming up with another plan to ensure that the community will be safe.

"When July 15 comes, if that's [still] the target date and we accomplish that, we are going to make sure that what we're doing is going to be safe for this community," said Muña.

Muña also stated that with the SolGent test kits from South Korea getting U.S. Food and Drug Administration approval, it "changes the game," and it is something that will be offered to anyone arriving on Saipan.

"We're going to be working with the COVID-19 Task Force and the [Governor's Authorized Representative], to ensure that we have this process perfect for safety," Muña added.

Although home isolation isn't ideal as of now, but with the easing of restrictions and the island potentially opening up its boarders on July 15, home isolation could be a possibility moving forward. Muña believes that it can happen once the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force has a better understanding of what's in the community.

"As we continue to ramp up our contact tracing and better understand what's in our community, that could be a possibility," said Muña. As of now, home isolation is not a possibility.

To date, the CNMI has 22 confirmed COVID-19 cases, with 13 recoveries, two deaths, and seven active cases.

COVID-19 in Guam

The Department of Public Health and Social Services tested 64 individuals for COVID-19 last May 26. Two tested positive and 62 tested negative, and one new probable case of COVID-19 reported to DPHSS. The case tested positive through serology testing at Diagnostic Laboratory Services and was classified as a probable case.

To date, Guam has 170 COVID-19 cases, five deaths, 143 released from isolation, and 22 active cases.

‘Schools’ reopening depends on COVID-19 status’

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Public School System is currently working on all possible scenarios for the opening of the new school year, with a tentative reopening date as PSS awaits guidance from the Governor’s COVID-19 Task Force.

Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada said in an interview that the September reopening is tentative and they are still waiting for word from the task force and approval of the Board of Education.

“Most of this is dependent on board approval. Right now, with all the directives, we’re [also] keeping an eye on the COVID-19 [situation]. I need permission from the governor and the task force regarding the opening of schools. The situation is constantly changing and we need to work with the government regarding COVID-19. We will adjust everything based on guidance from the task force,” he said.

In the meantime, Ada said PSS is preparing for all possible scenarios and looking at all options. “We need to account for all possible scenarios. This includes the possibility of full reopening of the schools, with physical contact. Option 1 is to return to normal with total reopening of schools. Option 2 is partial reopening. Option 3 is remote learning and, under remote learning, Subsection A is fully online. Under remote learning Subsection B is blended learning,” he said.

Ada clarified that the transition to 100% remote learning is still just one possibility. “We are finding out that not all of our community is ready for remote learning. We’re trying to but, under partial opening, we will have small groups. We will be prepared for all the scenarios so that we can adjust based on the data we have,” he said.

Ada said PSS will try every option once schools reopen to determine which is more efficient in light of the current pandemic. “We will try each option and we will account for quality learning as well as safety of students and staff,” he said.

Zajradhara arrested for domestic violence

Police arrested a man in China Town Monday afternoon for allegedly hitting his wife on the forehead.

The wife was crying when police officers responded to the house. She was taken to the hospital after she complained of dizziness and pain on the head.

Zaji O. Zajradhara, 57, was taken before Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho at the Supreme Court courtroom yesterday afternoon for a bail hearing on charges of assault and battery, assault, and disturbing the peace.

According to police detective Eugene Dillay, police officers responded to an apartment in China Town after receiving a call about a domestic violence Monday afternoon. When the officers arrived at the apartment, Zajradhara told them that he accidentally hit his wife with a towel, Dillay said.

One officer saw the wife crying while holding an infant in the bathroom.

The wife told police that Zajradhara was talking on the phone with a friend and that she got mad after hearing her husband tell the friend that she’s lazy, has no job, and has no money.

She said she told Zajradhara that she and their two children will be sleeping at her mother’s house in Susupe. Zajradhara allegedly got mad, grabbed a towel and hit her in the forehead with it. The wife said she also felt her husband’s fist hit her on her forehead. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Group hands out care packages on Rota

A volunteer helps with the distribution of care packages on Rota. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Friends of CWs volunteers pose for a picture with Rota mayor Efraim Atalig.

Friends of CWs volunteers pose for a picture with Fr. Rey Rosal.

The group Friends of CWs held their fifth distribution of care packages last week at the West Harbor in Songsong, Rota, giving away 150 care packages to contract workers and humanitarian parolees.

The care packages included rice, canned goods, coffee, noodles, butane gas canisters, toilet paper, garlic, and onion.

Volunteer Irene Holl thanked Hardt Eye Clinic, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. staff, anonymous donors, and individuals for their donations and assistance. The donations benefited foreign workers on Rota who are unemployed and furloughed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We thank the companies and individuals who helped make all the five distribution possible, with both donors and volunteers. About 532 households have received assistance, including Rota,” she said

The Friends of CWs has so far held four package distribution on Saipan and one on Rota. “We also thank Senate President Victor Hocog and Mayor Efraim Atalig for helping us plan and facilitate the distribution,” added Holl.

Holl said the remaining packages were left with Fr. Rey Rosal to continue with the distribution since her team had to leave for Saipan on Sunday morning. “I thank Father Rey Rosal as well for helping with the care packages,” she said.

Holl also acknowledged the Rotary Club of Saipan for sharing their chartered plane and the three boats that took their care packages to Rota.

Three other volunteers—Alma Basilgo, Ladyvir Canape, and Danny Borlain—joined Holl during the group’s distribution on Rota. ***(Chevy Alipio)***

PACIFIC ISLANDS CLUB SAIPAN

We are seeking for high energy individuals with a positive, can do attitude.
Pacific Islands Club, Saipan is inviting qualified, U.S. workers to apply for the following positions:

(1) ACCOUNT ANALYST
Associates Degree in Accounting. 24 months work experience is required. Must be able to work flexible shifts, weekends and holiday. Able to lift up to 50 lbs.

(3) ASSISTANT RESTAURANT MANAGER
High school diploma or equivalent, 12 months of work experience. Must be proficient with the use of Microsoft Office software and the use of Micros point-of-sale systems. Must be able to work evenings, weekends and holidays. Hotel/Resort experience a plus.

(2) BAKER
High School Diploma or equivalent with no more than 6 months experience. Knowledge and experience in hotel/resort as baker is an advantage, must be able to work flexible hours including weekends and holidays. The employee must regularly lift and/or move up to 10-25 pounds. Apprenticeship from recognized technical school preferred.

(1) BARTENDER
High School Diploma, Must be able to work flexible shifts (weekends, holidays, night and days) able to stand long periods of time. Possess a strong knowledge in service standards, guest relations an etiquette. At least 12 months experience, must be over 21 years old.

(1) BUILDING MAINTENANCE
Must have a High School diploma or equivalent. No more than 24 months of work experience as building maintenance. Must be able to work evenings, weekends and holidays. Must be able to lift up to 50lbs regularly. Safely climb ladders while carrying up to 40lbs. Able to stand, walk, sit, climb or balance, stoop, crawl kneel work at height up to 100 feet. Work under extreme weather conditions. Solid understanding of technical aspects of plumbing, carpentry, electrical systems.

(17) BUILDING MAINTENANCE
Must have a High School diploma or equivalent. No more than 24 months of work experience as building maintenance. Must be able to work evenings, weekends and holidays. Must be able to lift up to 50lbs regularly. Safely climb ladders while carrying up to 40lbs. Able to stand, walk, sit, climb or balance, stoop, crawl kneel work at height up to 100 feet. Work under extreme weather conditions. Solid understanding of technical aspects of plumbing, carpentry, electrical systems.

(7) CHEF DE PARTIE
High School or equivalent. No more than 12 months’ experience for supervisor level. Able to work flexible shifts (weekends, holidays, days and nights) including inclement weather. Knowledge of international cuisine. Completion of apprenticeship is preferred.

(17) COOK
Knowledge and experience in hotel/resort as a cook is an advantage. 12 months work experience. Must be able to lift and/or move up to 10-25 pounds. Must be able to work flexible shifts, weekends and holidays.

(1) ENTERTAINMENT CREW/HOST
High school diploma or equivalent. 12 months work experienced. Required to work holiday, weekends, day and shift as needed. Able to work outdoors for periods of time. Ability to host into an entertainer. Ability to interact effectively and make connections with people different age groups. Experienced emcee or host for weddings, hotel, resorts and similar settings.

(9) FOOD & BEVERAGE SUPERVISOR
High School diploma. No more than 12 months’ experience in supervisory level. Able to work weekends, holiday and flexible shifts.

(2) LIFEGUARD
High School diploma or equivalent, 3 months work experienced. Must be a certified lifeguard. Proficient in Microsoft, detail oriented, flexible to work different shifts including weekends and holidays. Due to demographics of visitors to Saipan, Bi-lingual in English-Korean or English-Chinese is preferred.

(1) NIGHT AUDITOR
Associate in Accounting is required and no more than 24 months’ work experience. Must have business knowledge on basic functions of debits and credits; knowledge on hotel-related systems particularly on front office systems and point-of-sale systems of the hotel industry; strong knowledge of excel and word; and must be knowledgeable in using opera (property management system), micros simphony, and oracle hospitality reporting and analytics; familiarity on how the hotel settlement system works.

(1) RESERVATION SUPERVISOR
High School diploma or equivalent. No more than 12 months experience working supervisor experience preferably in hospitality (Reservation or Front Office). Excellent verbal and written communication skills. Excellent in customer service skills including dealing with patrons/tour vendors. Excellent organization skills and attention to detail. Proficient with Microsoft office site and hotel reservation system preferably Opera. Able to work flexible shift including weekends, holidays and evening. Bilingual is preferred due to market segment (Korean-English).

PIC applications are available at the PIC Security Desk by the Loading Dock/Employee Entrance.
Incomplete applications will NOT be accepted or considered.
PIC is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

O'Connor law firm out as IPI counsel in 2 suits, but stays in 1 suit

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federal court has granted the motion of law firm O'Connor Berman Horey and Banes to withdraw as counsel for IPI in connection with two lawsuits filed by two contractors.

At a hearing last Friday, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona, however, denied O'Connor's motion to withdraw as counsel for IPI in the third lawsuit filed by contractor U.S.A. Fanter Corp. Ltd. This will allow the bench trial on the mechanic's lien issue to go forward, Manglona said.

U.S.A. Fanter is suing IPI for allegedly refusing to pay $2.08 million for construction work it did on IPI's casino in Garapan. U.S.A. Fanter asked the court to attach mechanic's lien to IPI's interests in the real property on the project. A mechanic's lien refers to a security interest in the title to property for the benefit of those who have supplied labor or materials that improve the property.

Manglona granted O'Connor's motion to withdraw as counsel for IPI in Pacific Rim Land Development LLC's lawsuit, but required IPI to seek new counsel in two weeks or by Friday, June 5.

IPI counsel Michael Dotts informed the court that he will make a special appearance to accept service of all filings by Pacific Rim. Dotts said an attorney has been identified and will enter an appearance shortly.

Pacific Rim is suing IPI and five unnamed alleged co-conspirators for allegedly failing to pay it for the construction work it did on the casino project. Pacific Rim said it is owed $5.65 million but wants to collect approximately $10 million in damages from IPI.

Manglona granted O'Connor's motion to withdraw as counsel for IPI in U.S.A. Fanter Corp. Ltd.'s defamation suit, but required IPI to seek new counsel by June 5. Manglona notified IPI of possible consequences if no counsel makes an appearance.

U.S.A. Fanter is suing IPI for issuing statements published in two newspapers that allegedly contained libelous statements. U.S.A. Fanter is demanding unspecified damages. The company also asked the court to require IPI to make a public retraction of the statements.

In their opposition to the O'Connor law firm's motion, Pacific Rim and U.S.A. Fanter, through counsel Colin M. Thompson, said the law firm only gave a hint of the reasons it wishes to withdraw.

Thompson said the court should deny the motion until the law firm gives a compelling reason and a new counsel that is prepared to take over the case and a legitimate plan for meeting the court's deadlines.

Cong Nie, who is a member of the O'Connor law firm, said the basis for this motion is that professional considerations warrant withdrawal.

IPI recently terminated attorneys Sean E. Frink, Catherine J. Cachero, and their law firm as its counsel in a lawsuit filed in federal court by seven former workers against IPI, MCC International Saipan Ltd. Co., and MCC's subcontractor, Gold Mantis Construction Decoration (CNMI) LLC, over the alleged injuries they suffered during accidents at the worksite of IPI's resort/casino project in Garapan.

Former attorney general Joey Patrick San Nicolas and Viola Alepuyo are also already out as IPI counsel.

IPI recently hired Dotts as its new counsel in a lawsuit filed by seven former workers against IPI.

NAP to issue supplemental allotments for June to August

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service has approved the CNMI's request to provide supplemental allotments for eligible and ongoing Department of Community and Cultural Affairs' Nutrition Assistance Program households in the CNMI for June 2020 to August 2020.

According to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres in an announcement Monday, DCCA-NAP has been provided a one-time grant of $620,563 from the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and $1.24 million from the CARES Act, for a combined total of $1,860,563.

Supplemental allotments provide maximum monthly benefit allotments to new and ongoing households to respond to the effects of COVID-19. As an example, a household of four on Saipan, who was entitled to $546 in DCCA-NAP monthly allotment, would receive an additional $398 in supplemental allotment, so that the household receives the maximum allotment of $944 for household size of four.

Maximum Monthly Benefit Allotments			
Household Size	Saipan	Tinian	Rota
1	$283	$299	$344
2	$519	$546	$629
3	$743	$782	$901
4	$944	$998	$1,150
5	$1,121	$1,180	$1,360
6	$1,345	$1,417	$1,544
7	$1,487	$1,569	$1,808
8	$1,699	$1,785	$2,057
9	$1,911	$2,012	$2,319
10	$2,123	$2,237	$2,578

Households on Tinian and Rota will receive the maximum allotments as approved for those islands.

Contingent to the USDA Food and Nutrition Service approval, DCCA-NAP is required to record and report on the new grants separately. As a result, a new coupon type was developed for Emergency Allotment coupons so that expenditure of the grants can be tracked and reported separately.

The emergency allotment coupons were created with "Local" and "Regular," except that there will be an additional coupon type: $1 Regular Emergency Allotment coupon.

Effective June 2020, the Nutrition Assistance Program will be issuing emergency coupons in addition to their ongoing NAP coupons. Emergency allotment coupons will be redeemed the same way NAP coupons are redeemed. "Local" coupons will be used to purchase eligible local food commodities, while "Regular" coupons will be used to purchase imported food commodities, including eligible garden tools and fishing equipment.

Households with NAP certifications expiring in June 2020 are required to renew the cases

The DCCA-NAP would like to remind households whose certifications are expiring in June 2020 that they are required to submit a new application for renewal in order to receive benefits for July 2020 and onwards. Households should submit their applications for renewal as soon as possible to avoid delays from receiving their benefits.

To receive an application, households can visit the NAP Certification Unit office in As Lito or visit the DCCA website at www.dcca.gov.mp.

Applications must be submitted to the NAP Certification Unit office drop box at the ground floor of the JTV Commercial Building in As Lito. Applications can be submitted anytime via the drop box.

For questions regarding applications or renewals contact the NAP Certification Unit at 237-2801 or 237-2802. ***(PR)***

NAP to continue issuing benefits via drive-thru service throughout June

The Nutrition Assistance Program will be distributing benefits through drive-thru service again at their office location in As Lito from 8am to 3pm from June 1 to 15, 2020.

This means eligible households will be issued their benefits to them while in their vehicle. This drive thru service is in conformance with Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' extended Public Health Emergency declaration and for ensuring the protocols for social distancing are in place to ensure safety and protection of the public and Nutrition Assistance Program personnel from Covid-19. There will be no walk-in service during the drive-thru period.

Walk-in service for benefit pick-up only will be available beginning June 16 to 30, 2020. Additionally, only those whose names appear on the valid NAP Identification Card may receive their household's benefits. In addition to the NAP Identification Card, the individual must have a valid photo identification card such as a valid driver's license or passport.

The Nutrition Assistance Program has developed a schematic of how the benefit distribution will take place. See illustration.

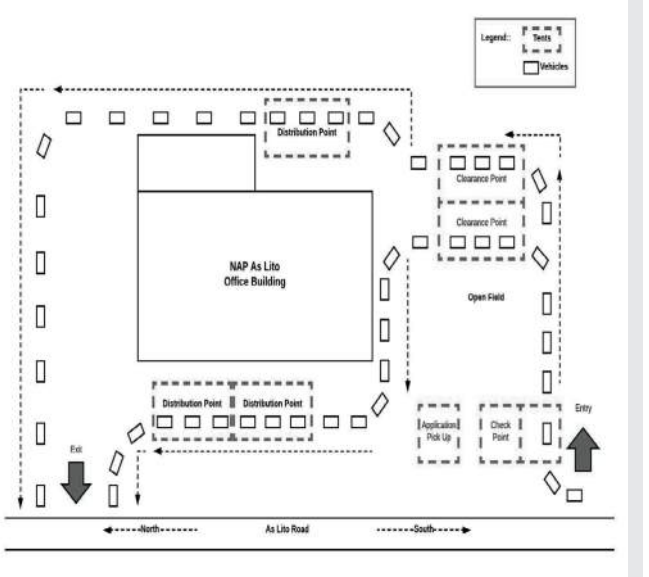
Drive-Thru Benefit Issuance Schedule for Saipan

June 1, 2020	Monday	Case Records Ending with "1"
June 2, 2020	Tuesday	Case Records Ending with "2"
June 3, 2020	Wednesday	Case Records Ending with "3"
June 4, 2020	Thursday	Case Records Ending with "4"
June 5, 2020	Friday	Case Records Ending with "5"
June 8, 2020	Monday	Case Records Ending with "6"
June 9, 2020	Tuesday	Case Records Ending with "7"
June 10, 2020	Wednesday	Case Records Ending with "8"
June 11, 2020	Thursday	Case Records Ending with "9"
June 12, 2020	Friday	Case Records Ending with "0"
June 15, 2020	Monday	Open Day

Issuances for Open Day will also be conducted through drive-thru. Open Day is intended for households who missed or were unable to pick up their benefits according to the Issuance Schedule. The NAP will strictly enforce the issuance schedule, so there will be no early issuances. Carpooling or car-sharing is allowed however households must follow their schedule in order to receive their benefits.

Walk-in service, for benefit pick up only, will be available from June 16 to 30, 2020.

Households who would like to inquire about the status of their applications may contact the NAP office at 237-2801 or 2802. ***(PR)***



Navy to move medical facility to prepare for typhoon season

ASAN, Guam—U.S. Navy sailors are scheduled to begin movement of a Navy Expeditionary Medical Facility, currently situated on DoD property in South Finegayan, to a new location in Santa Rita in the coming weeks.

As the Mariana Islands and the greater Indo-Pacific prepare for typhoon season, DoD leadership elected to carry out the EMF's relocation to a hardened facility to preserve its mission readiness in the face of possible destructive winds and rain.

"As a military organization, we have to be ready to adjust to changing conditions on the ground, and still be postured to complete the mission. The decision to move the EMF to Santa Rita was made based on prudent recommendations from our medical and expeditionary leadership," said Rear Adm. John Menoni, commander, Joint Region Marianas. "We are committed to maintaining our ability to provide a critical capacity backstop for U.S. Naval Hospital Guam's COVID-19 response, and we will remain ready, if requested, to support Guam and the region."

The purpose of the EMF's original construction in South Finegayan was to rapidly expand the military's on-island medical capability and capacity to be ready to support the recovery of Sailors assigned to aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71). In addition, the EMF augmented DoD's ability to respond to the threat posed by COVID-19 in the region and to maintain mission readiness.

Service members will begin relocating the EMF and integrate its medical structures and capabilities with pre-existing hardened structures at Naval Base Guam's Santa Rita compound, providing the EMF with increased durability and mitigating the risks posed by destructive weather.

The EMF is a self-contained medical care facility which will remain deployed on Guam to provide expanded medical capabilities in support of the DoD's COVID-19 response. Additionally, the EMF will enable forces to be postured to support Guam and the region if a Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) mission is requested.

The EMF's status as a Role 3 Military Treatment Facility (MTF) provides additional medical services similar to that of a community hospital, including operating rooms, an intensive care unit, an acute care ward, extended patient holding, equipment sterilization, a medical laboratory, a pharmacy, and other ancillary services. ***(PR)***

THINGS TO KNOW

As of May 27, 2020. All information may change without prior notice. For corrections and additions to this list, send an email to editor@saipantribune.com or call 235-6397 or 235-2440.

CNMI Economic Recovery Plan
The Office of the Governor releases its CNMI Economic Recovery Plan, which lays out the CNMI's phased approach and the CNMI COVID-19 Community Vulnerability Rating System. For details, click on link at www.saipantribune.com.

Q&A on PUA and FPUC
General questions and answers about the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, or PUA, and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation, or FPUC, programs. For details, click on link at www.saipantribune.com.

Process for mass testing
Mass testing for COVID-19 is ongoing at the Saipan International Airport. The test is free. People interested in being tested for COVID-19 can request for an appointment for specimen collection on the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. website at https://chcc.gov.mp/covid-19testing.php or over the phone through the COVID-19 Info Line. For more information, see link at www.saipantribune.com.

Updated Government Resource list
The CNMI government has issued an updated government resource listing as of May 19, 2020, which includes all government offices and agencies that are operational and offering services to the public during the governor›s public health emergency. See Page 10 of today's *Saipan Tribune*. For additional details, click on link at www.saipantribune.com.

SBA Fact Sheet
The U.S. Small Business Administration has issued a "Fact Sheet for the CNMI" about the Paycheck Protection Program and Economic Injury Disaster Loans. Read it by clicking on the link at www.saipantribune.com.

FAQs: Employee Retention Credit under the CARES Act
The Employee Retention Credit under the CARES Act encourages businesses to keep employees on their payroll. The refundable tax credit is 50% of up to $10,000 in wages paid by an eligible employer whose business has been financially impacted by COVID-19. For details, go to https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/faqs-employee-retention-credit-under-the-cares-act.

FBI alert vs online scams
FBI issue an alert to the public to be on the lookout for scams that exploit the current COVID-19 pandemic. See FBI advisory at the link on www.saipantribune.com.

LIMITED SERVICES

JKPL reopens with limited services
Effective May 26, 2020, the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library facility reopened for limited public services by appointment only to ensure health and safety of our patrons. Also, effective yesterday, the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library hours of operation will be from Tuesday to Friday, from 9am to 4pm. For more details, click on **link** at www.saipantribune.com.

CUC Customer Center hours
The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. would like to inform the public of its new business hours for the CUC Customer Center. The center will be open Monday through Friday, from 7:30 am to 3pm to assist customers with their CUC accounts and/or payment to CUC/ prepaid load purchase.

Customers are also encouraged to use the following options for CUC bill payments:

- For online payments, log into www.cucgov.org
- For pay-by-phone, dial 1-855-729-2282
- Other locations for CUC bill payment: Bank of Saipan, Bank of Guam, Bank of Hawaii

For emergencies, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) and monitor CUC's Facebook page for the latest updates.

OVR resumes normal office hours
The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation's office hours have resumed back to Monday to Friday, from 7:30am to 4:30pm.

Modified VR services during the COVID-19 pandemic continue to be in effect. Individuals needing to apply for OVR services are still encouraged to reach out to OVR via phone at (670) 322-6537 / 6538. A staff member will provide further information on our modified processes.

If you have access to the internet and would like more information, visit www.ovrgov.net to view OVR requirements. If you do not have access to the internet, inform our offices and an information/ referral/ orientation packet will be mailed to you.

BECQ announces updated hours of operation
The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality has announced that they are now providing services to the public from Monday to Friday, 9am – 3pm, during the current government shutdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

BECQ will be practicing social distancing and safety measures for the protection of their visitors and staff. The designated visitor's entrance will be the BECQ main entrance and visitors parking will be in the front of the BECQ building. For details, click on link at www.saipantribune.com

USDA outlines telehealth service changes
The U.S. Department of Agriculture issues a summary of key service changes to increase the use of telehealth in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These measures include allowing rural health clinics and federally qualified health centers to serve as "distant site" providers, increasing the types of services that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services can deliver via telehealth, and allowing certain telehealth services to be delivered to Medicare recipients by phone. For details, go to https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDARD/bulletins/289d418.

USDA RD steps to help
USDA Rural Development has taken a number of immediate actions to help rural residents, businesses and communities affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. Rural Development will keep our customers, partners, and stakeholders continuously updated as more actions are taken to better serve rural America. Visit www.rd.usda.gov/coronavirus for more information. Or click on https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDARD/bulletins/2894700.

Commerce Department in operation
The CNMI Department of Commerce will continue to provide services to the CNMI business community via means of teleworking.

For direct support and services, the CNMI is advised to contact the support team via the department's website at info@commerce.gov.mp and indicate the attention to the respective division or section for the appropriate services. See DOC advisory at the link at www.saipantribune.com.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
RFP NO.: RFP20-OGM-070

SUBMISSION DATE: JUNE 22, 2020 TIME: 09:30 A.M.

"2020 MAINTENANCE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EMERGENCY RESPONDER RADIO REPEATER SYSTEM FOR THE MUNICIPALITY OF ROTA A PROJECT UNDER THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR, OFFICE OF GRANTS MANAGEMENT & STATE CLEARINGHOUSE"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS. ****MUST USE A FACE MASK BEFORE ENTERING THE OFFICE****

A **PRE-BID MEETING** WILL BE HELD AT THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ROOM ON **JUNE 08, 2020 AT 10:00 A.M., LOCAL TIME**.
****ALL PARTICIPANTS/ATTENDEES ARE REQUIRED TO USE A FACE MASK AND EXERCISE SOCIAL DISTANCING FOR THE DURATION OF THE MEETING****

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFP MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING TO **MR.EPIPHANIO E. CABRERA, JR., ADMINISTRATOR**, VIA E-MAIL TO epi.cabrera@gov.mp **NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS JUNE 11, 2020**.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGH.T TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ EPIPHANIO E. CABRERA, JR.
ADMINISTRATOR, OFFICE OF GRANTS

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

MHS graduation ceremony
Marianas High School Class of 2020 Virtual Commencement will be on June 11, 2020, at 4pm. Link to the Facebook site will be provided soon.

On June 11, 2020, the Class of 2020 will assemble at American Memorial Park at 1pm. Convoy will begin at 1:30pm. Seniors will leave AMP to proceed to MHS campus. Seniors will have a drive-thru pick-up of diplomas. ***(PR)***

5.2-magnitude quake on Tinian
At 3:25pm on May 26, 2020, a report of a 5.2-magnitude earthquake occurred 167 kilometers east southeast of JP Tinian Town pre-WW2, Northern Mariana Islands. Currently, there are no tsunami warnings or advisories that were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. For more information, please contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at 237-8000. ***(PR)***

5.4-magnitude quake in Merizo
At 9:22am on May 26, 2020, a report of a 5.4-magnitude earthquake occurred 89 kilometers south southwest of Merizo in Guam. Currently, there are no tsunami warnings or advisories that were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. ***(PR)***

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB20-DFEMS-071

SUBMISSION DATE: JUNE 04, 2020 TIME: 09:30 A.M.

"DFEMS WEBSITE AND EMAIL HOSTING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS. ****MUST USE A FACE MASK BEFORE ENTERING THE OFFICE****

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ DENNIS C. MENDIOLA
COMMISSIONER, DFEMS

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

NORTHERN MARIANAS COLLEGE
Procurement & Property Management Office
P.O. Box 501250 • Saipan, MP 96950 U.S.A.
Phone: (670) 234-5498 Ext. 6804 • www.marianas.edu

Building Demolition Project:
Buildings A, A1, B, B1 C, D, E, F, G, H, I, Q, R & S

INVITATION FOR BIDS
NMC IFB 20-0002

Northern Marianas College (The College) is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the building demolition project at the NMC Saipan campus.

Specifications and Scope of Work packets may be picked up at the **NMC Procurement Office, Bldg. O, commencing Wednesday, May 27, 2020 between the hours of 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.** for the electronic packet, please send request to Anita Camacho (anita.camacho@marianas.edu).

Mandatory Pre-bid conference is scheduled on June 16, 2020 at 9:00 am. NMC continues to practice social distancing due to the ongoing COVID19 restrictions. The pre-bid conference will take place through Zoom Video - Conferencing Platform. Zoom ID No.: 928 5800 5961.

Electronic Bid submissions:
NMCIFB20-0002@marianas.edu
Due Date and Time: 10:00 am, June 30, 2020, Chamorro Standard Time (ChST).

Bids, hard copies submission:
Procurement & Property Management Office, Bldg. O, As Terlaje Campus
Due Date and Time: 10:00 am, June 30, 2020, (ChST).

Paid for by 100% Federal Funds through US Department of Education, Emergency Assistance to Institution of Higher Education Grant, award no. P938T190005.
In accordance with Public Law 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, Local Preference is not available to local businesses for this procurement.

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. The College reserves the right to reject any and/or all bids for any reason and waive any defect in said bids, or cancel in part or its entirety this IFB, if it deems, in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College.

Approved by:

/s/ Anita Camacho
Procurement & Property Manager

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
editor@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER
The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

100,000 Americans have died from COVID-19. As a nation, it's time to mourn and honor them

This week, the United States is set to pass another sorrowful milestone in the coronavirus pandemic: 100,000 dead from COVID-19.

It bears repeating: One hundred thousand Americans dead since the first known coronavirus death in the U.S. in February. It's a staggering figure, the equivalent of a Vacaville, Calif., or a Tuscaloosa, Ala., wiped out in just three months.

It's a number that's no more or less meaningful than 99,337 or 100,152 to the people who died alone, hooked up to a ventilator in a hospital room or gasping for breath through fluid-filled lungs at home. And it's certainly not as large a figure as it might have been but for widespread stay-at-home restrictions.

But for those of us left to take stock, it's an appropriate time to pause and mourn the many people who have died before their time, and the countless more who will be lost before the pandemic is over. The fathers and mothers and sons and daughters. The favorite cousins, dear uncles and aunts. The best friends and personal heroes. The spouses and lovers.

Why mourn at all? People die every day from infections, accidents and violence and we don't make a big deal about them in any collective fashion. And weren't most of the victims old and sick and near the end of their lives anyhow?

Here's why: The coronavirus, unlike the flu or car accidents, is a natural disaster for which we have no defense. It's effects are no less tragic than a massive deadly earthquake or wildfire, albeit slower moving. If 100,000 people died on a single day from anything, would we even wonder if it was appropriate to mark their passing in some fashion?

And as for the idea that the coronavirus victims would have died soon anyway? Many of the dead were not old or particularly sick. One recent preliminary study (which has yet to be peer reviewed so should be viewed with appropriate skepticism) found that people who died from COVID-19 might have lived at least another decade on average had they not been infected. Think of it: One hundred thousand people who might have lived another 10 or 13 years.

Another sobering data point is the number of additional dead this year. In April, federal data indicated that California was on track for 9% more deaths from all factors this year than its historical average. This suggests there are more coronavirus victims than have been identified.

So why do it now? After three months of stress, death and ugly partisan battles over the smallest coronavirus response, the nation needs the catharsis of a shared moment. Expressing loss is something that unites us all in healing. And we need some healing to get through the months of stress, death and ugly partisan battles to come.

But what is the proper way for the nation to grieve a still-unfolding tragedy? Fly flags at half staff, as they are at federal buildings? Organize a mid-pandemic memorial ceremony with political, cultural and spiritual leaders? Observe a moment of collective silence at some predetermined time and day? Yes. That should do.

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THE VIRUS ESCAPED FROM A CHINESE LAB.
COVID-19 IS A HOAX.
THE PANDEMIC IS A PLOT BY THE DEEP STATE.
HAROLD, HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU TO PUT THE ASSORTED NUTS AWAY?
MIKE SMITH

UN must extend arms embargo on Iran—and US should have a backup plan

By MARK S. KIRK
Chicago Tribune

Mark S. Kirk, a former U.S. senator from Illinois, is a senior adviser at United Against Nuclear Iran.

Diplomats at the United Nations have less than six months to stop Iran—the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism, violator of nuclear nonproliferation agreements and catalyst for regional warfare—from buying weapons from the world's most eager salesmen, Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping.

The U.N. arms embargo on Iran is scheduled to sunset starting in October, and if it does, Tehran and its terror proxies, regional allies and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps will be stronger than ever. Our first priority should be to extend and strengthen the embargo. But America needs a backup plan to mitigate the Iranian threat, which was exacerbated by the Iran nuclear deal brokered by the Obama administration.

To critics of the decision to withdraw from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, it is important to remember that while the U.S. was a party to the deal, Iran took American hostages, test-launched multiple ballistic missiles and extended its unbroken record of being the world's foremost sponsor of global terrorism. The regime's belligerence since May 2018 is simply an extension of that long-established behavioral pattern.

Over the past year alone, Iran has attacked or seized oil tankers in the Persian Gulf, shot down a U.S. drone, struck Saudi Aramco facilities and hit a U.S. base in Iraq with ballistic missiles. It has long supported the Assad regime in Syria and inflamed the civil war in Yemen by arming the Houthi rebels. In fact, just in February, U.S. naval forces intercepted a number of Iranian arms shipments to the Houthis that included, among other weapons, anti-tank guided missiles and loitering surface-to-air missiles.

We cannot afford for such a dangerous regime to acquire Russian and Chinese arms, the likelihood of which is not a hypothetical thought exercise. The U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency reports that both nations are planning to sell Iran weaponry, including fighter jets, main battle tanks, attack helicopters and modern naval capabilities when the embargo is lifted.

A more heavily armed Iran will certainly increase regional tensions and conflicts, and may feel emboldened to increase its horrific domestic repression. At least 1,500 protesters were murdered last winter during a bloody crackdown by security forces. And, despite efforts to rein in its nuclear program, Iran is enriching uranium at higher levels than it was before the Iran deal, hiding nuclear sites and improving its ballistic missile technology.

It is evident, now more than ever, that the U.S. needs a robust plan to keep Russia, China and Iran from changing the security paradigm if Tehran suddenly finds itself free to arm itself with some of the world's most advanced weapons. Rather than wait for the sunset clauses to take effect, there are three immediate steps the Trump administration should consider:

_Preparing to impose macroeconomic costs for conventional arms proliferation by Russia and China.

_Revisiting old collective security mechanisms.

_Considering new mechanisms to bolster global defenses against Iranian aggression.

On the economic front, the administration should prepare a series of harsh economic sanctions that would be unilaterally imposed on Russia, China and other U.S. adversaries should they engage in conventional arms proliferation with Iran. Congress could find models in laws mandating sanctions for the proliferation of chemical and biological weapons.

On the security front, the administration—with cooperation from allies and assistance from regional partners—should look for ways to strengthen the Gulf Cooperation Council's interoperable ballistic missile defense architecture. Providing responsible increases for the GCC's missile defenses might deter an Iranian attempt to target the territory of our allies. Such a move might be advisable even without the likelihood of the arms embargo expiring, as Iran has shown stunning military incompetence this year in the downing of a Ukrainian passenger jet and the sinking of its own warship.

Finally, the U.S. should consider resurrecting talks on the Middle East Strategic Alliance to counter and prevent Iran's escalating terrorism and cybersecurity threats. We need to coordinate with our allies on intelligence collection, terror finance and targeted actions to keep Americans safe; revisiting the formation of a unified security bloc of U.S. partner states would allow us to keep a close watch on Iran's propaganda efforts and provide opportunity to build greater unity with critical regional allies.

Allowing the arms embargo to sunset will only enhance Iran's ability to pursue these goals. We should prevent that. But we cannot wait to build alternatives if our efforts fall short.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

By CALVIN GLADNEY
Tribune News Service

Calvin Gladney is president and CEO of Smart Growth America. This column was produced for the Progressive Media Project, which is run by The Progressive *magazine, and distributed by Tribune News Service.*

US economy needs to reset, not restart

The disproportionate COVID-19-related death rates and job losses suffered by communities of color in the United States are a stark reminder of the glaring systemic inequities baked into our economy.

Getting back to "normal" will only serve to deepen these disparities. Instead, we need a top-to-bottom shift in our economy that puts the health, prosperity and resilience of all people—whatever their race, class or gender—as our core priority.

That means rethinking our automobile-centered way of life. The dramatically cleaner air we're now breathing, and the steep decline in traffic crashes are examples of what can happen when we drive less and share the road with pedestrians, cyclists, the mobility-impaired and public transit.

Cleaner air and fewer cars on the road will save lives and promote equity. On average, nearly 100,000 Americans die from air pollution each year. Members of minority populations and people of lower socioeconomic status are exposed to more traffic and vehicle-related air pollution, which a new Harvard study shows contributes to higher COVID-19 death rates. Moreover, traffic crashes disproportionately kill pedestrians who are minorities.

We need to rethink our basic assumptions about what is possible and advocate for systems-level change. For example, Seattle and London both temporarily closed many streets to vehicle traffic to improve social distancing, but quickly realized the potential for ongoing health benefits. Seattle plans to permanently close 20 miles of streets to most vehicle traffic, and London plans to transform 22 miles for cycling and walking use.

To bring about systemic change, we must incentivize what we want and penalize what we don't want. For example, transportation is the nation's largest emitter of greenhouse gases, and the vast majority of those polluting and climate-changing emissions come from vehicle miles traveled, or VMTs, in cars. States and communities must measure VMTs per capita and set goals for their reduction.

Finally, to promote equity and resilience, we need to think more holistically about affordability. Often, especially for people of color, it's the combination of costs from housing and transportation that make communities unaffordable. That's why sprawling, auto-dependent Houston is now less affordable than New York City, and why we can't solve racial wealth disparities by focusing solely on housing costs.

The federal government deems housing affordable if it comprises less than 30% of one's income. A more holistic approach would deem a community affordable if no more than 45% of a person's income were spent on housing plus transportation. To achieve that goal, we must fund more affordable housing and support public transit, transit-oriented development, and pedestrian and biking infrastructure in communities of color and suburban and rural communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to reset the rules and take bold actions. Let's not lose that boldness going forward. Let's completely reimagine what and where we build, who and what we invest in, and who is at the table when all of those decisions are made.

This will bring about a healthier, more equitable and more climate-resilient life for all Americans, and a world we can be proud to hand off to future generations.

Nonprofits under siege

By ANDREW MARTIN
Tribune News Service

Andrew Martin is a New York City-based nonprofit communications and development strategist.

These past few months have taken a serious toll on every American; especially those who recently lost their jobs and are struggling to find work, keep food on the table for their families, and do everything possible to avoid becoming sick themselves.

The coronavirus has attached its tentacles to almost every aspect of our lives and has placed enormous strain on the 1.5 million local, regional and national nonprofits who are struggling to provide these much-needed services against a backdrop of significant losses in individual, corporate and foundation funding.

A survey of some 880 nonprofits last week by the Charities Aid Foundation of America found almost 95% have been negatively impacted by the spread of the virus; 15% have been forced to suspend their operations, another 60% have suspended or eliminated their regular programs and services and more than 70% have witnessed a significant reduction in the total number of contributions they normally receive, according to the survey.

One Alabama nonprofit leader put it best recently when she said, "I find the ironic thing is the nonprofit sector has been decimated but yet people are relying on them to be part of the answer."

I could not have said it better.

As a nonprofit professional who has seen the ebb and flow of fundraising efforts during other life-changing events, I'm not sure I've ever seen this kind of stranglehold on nonprofits. But I'm also not convinced it will last forever. In recent years other disasters including the horrific 9/11 attacks and the devastation brought about by hurricanes Katrina and Henry, to name a few, redirected fundraising for many local and national nonprofits struggling to provide services not related to these tragedies.

Many nonprofits survived and learned greatly from above challenges. We must now apply these same lessons to our work today as we help Americans struggling to survive the pandemic throughout every community in our nation.

First, we need to collectively acknowledge that it is most important for Americans to support the immediate needs of the people and communities most affected by the pandemic and other catastrophes. In fact, many nonprofits redirected a portion of their fundraising to support recovery efforts. While this may have some impact on our own programs and service delivery, we know it is right thing to do—for all Americans.

Second, we reassured our funders and supporters that, despite the impact such events would have on our own efforts, we could and would continue to provide crucial services to the individuals and families who most needed us. We remained prudent stewards of the funding we received from our benefactors and they saw firsthand how right they were to continue in their support.

Third, and perhaps most importantly, we revisited our mission and our work to see how such events could help us to expand services. We looked at the mental health impact had on Americans—especially children and young people from every part of the nation traumatized by the 9/11 attacks and we did so without straying from our own work.

We did this by studying the importance of rapid-rehousing for millions of people who lost their homes following the destruction left in the wake of hurricanes as well as the loss of schools, community-based programs, and other critical services. As such, we developed similar programs and services in our own communities with the knowledge such disasters might decimate us one day. Make no mistake: coronavirus will affect every aspect of our work going forward.

The future may well look bleak and unpromising for our nations' nonprofits. But past lessons serve as a reminder that these organizations won't need a vaccine to keep their mission strong and relevant, especially to those who will continue to rely on America's nonprofits in the days, months and years ahead.

Will schools open, be more normal in the fall? Or will COVID-19 disrupt another year?

By CYNTHIA M. ALLEN
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Cynthia M. Allen is a columnist for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram*. Readers may send her email at cmallen@star-telegram.com.*

Last week, our family gathered around the computer to watch our eldest daughter "graduate" from preschool.

It was the bittersweet and well-intended culmination of her school's effort to keep students connected after an abrupt and disappointing end to the semester.

Her teacher cried. And after my daughter realized, for perhaps the first time since this whole thing started, that she wouldn't be returning to her classroom and her classmates, she did, too.

Our anticlimactic end to the school year was not unique.

Children everywhere are closing out the academic year virtually, graduating online, saying goodbye to friends and teachers, with the same energy as astronauts waving from outer space—so close and yet so far.

Meanwhile, parents everywhere, who have become de facto educators and reluctant homeschoolers, are breathing a sigh of relief.

Glad that's over.

But is it?

Because there is good reason to believe that next school year is going to be equally challenging when it could be more normal.

The relative success or failure of schools to prevent outbreaks this summer will inform how districts proceed come the fall, when local leaders will decide what the new academic experience looks like.

To that end, the Centers for Disease Control have put forth guidelines for schools reopening, which herald an academic year of great tumult for children and parents, and a possible return to online learning at some point.

Some of the CDC guidance is benign, such as reinforcing good hand hygiene (easier said than done with kindergartners) and encouraging staff and students to stay home when exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 or other ailments.

But there are suggestions that seem downright dystopian: frequent health checks; cloth face coverings for children older than 2 years; closing dining halls and playgrounds; an end to field trips; separated desks; plastic screens between bathroom sinks; and hallways with single direction traffic and papered with signs reminding kids to stay 6 feet apart.

Never mind that these precautions will be challenging if not impossible to enforce; they will create an environment of fear, especially for young children and those with special needs.

Speaking of fear, the CDC guidance recommends that to avoid the ever-present concern of outbreak, each COVID-19 case in a school should result in dismissal for two to five days. Of course, that would disrupt academic and social development and create the same child care concerns that have plagued many families this spring, especially since more people should be working in the fall.

And how many interruptions can a school or district reasonably sustain before reverting to online learning for the remainder of the year? Then we're back to where we started.

As demanding as online learning has been for many families, some will choose to homeschool to avoid either the disease or the inevitable turbulence and troubling environment that awaits their children in the fall.

And who would blame them?

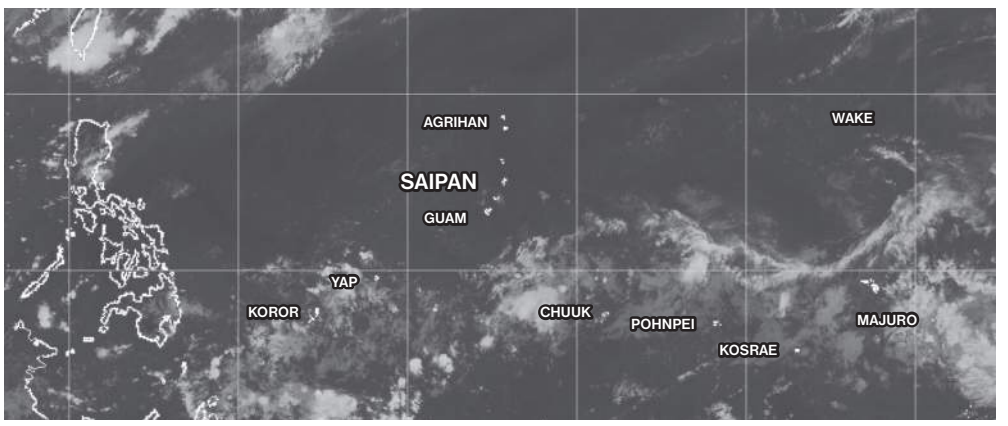
Because no one wants online preschool graduations to become the norm.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers. East winds 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
90° 78°	89° 78°	89° 79°	89° 79°	89° 79°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:09 AM, WEDNESDAY, MAY 27, 2020

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Dry weather and gentle trade winds continue across the Marianas. An upper-level low west of the Marianas is triggering a few thunderstorms just southwest of Guam waters. Another upper-level low is found south of Wake Island. Buoys and altimetry data show seas between 3 and 5 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

FLIGHT SCHEDULE

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				**GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN**			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	1, 4, 6	UA174	7:30am	8:11am	1, 4, 6

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Mostly Sunny	87° / 79°
Palau	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Yap	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°
Pohnpei	Mostly Cloudy	86° / 79°
Kosrae	Cloudy	85° / 80°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	84° / 80°

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Showers	63° / 57°
Beijing	Sunny	93° / 64°
Hong Kong	Thunderstorm	86° / 81°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	85° / 73°
London	Mostly Sunny	72° / 52°
Los Angeles	Sunny	86° / 63°
Manila	Thunderstorm	93° / 81°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	63° / 45°
Miami	Thunderstorm	84° / 78°
New York	Showers	74° / 66°
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	81° / 63°
Paris	Sunny	77° / 54°
Busan	Mostly Cloudy	72° / 61°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	81° / 57°
Salem	Thunderstorm	79° / 66°
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	64° / 54°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	81° / 61°
Tokyo	Thunderstorm	75° / 61°
Washington, DC	Thunderstorm	78° / 73°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:46 AM	6:42 PM
Friday	5:45 AM	6:43 PM
Saturday	5:45 AM	6:43 PM
Sunday	5:45 AM	6:43 PM
Monday	5:45 AM	6:44 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	10:22 AM	11:36 PM	-
Friday	11:21 AM	-	-
Saturday	-	12:24 AM	12:19 PM
Sunday	-	1:09 AM	1:16 PM
Monday	-	1:54 AM	2:13 PM

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET	
12:36 AM	HIGH TIDE	2.01
6:09 AM	LOW TIDE	1.47
10:14 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.80
5:52 PM	LOW TIDE	-0.03

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

GOVERNMENT RESOURCE LISTING PAGE 1 MAY 21, 2020, 11:30 AM

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
- ***Cashier & Customer Service***
  Monday - Friday (Closed on Holidays)
  7:30 AM - 3:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-4282
  Pay bills online at www.cucgov.org, via phone by calling toll free Tel: 1-(855)-729-2282, or at any Bank of Guam, Bank of Saipan, or Bank of Hawaii Branch

CNMI State Medicaid Agency
- ***Eligibility Office & Accounting / Claims***
  Monday - Friday
  7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-4880/4882
  Still accepting applications and supporting documents via drop-box at Medicaid Office. Medicaid application & renewal / redetermination forms must be original. Applications/forms available for pick up next to the drop-box or online at: www.medicaid.cnmi.mp

Department of Land and Natural Resources
- ***Division of Land Registration***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 322-9987
- ***Division of Agriculture***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 256-3320 / 3321
- ***Division of Fish & Wildlife***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-6000

Office of the Attorney General
- ***Civil & Criminal Divisions***
  Monday - Friday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 237-7500 / 7600

Department of Public Works
- ***Administrative Services Division***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 235-9570 / 5818
- ***Building Safety Code Division***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 234-2726 / 2296
- ***Technical Services Division***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 234-9828 / 9838
  - ***Highway Branch***
    Monday - Friday
    7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
- ***Energy Division***
  Monday - Friday
  7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-4480 / 4481
- ***Roads and Grounds Division***
  Monday - Friday
  7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 322-9498
- ***Solid Waste Management Division***
  - ***Lower Base Transfer Station & Marpi Landfill***
    Open all week except Wednesday & Sunday
    7:30 AM - 1:00 PM
    Tel: (670) 322-2745 (Lower Base)
    (670) 322-2761 (Marpi Landfill)

CNMI Public Assistance Office
- ***Available via phone or email only:***
  Mondays - Fridays
  7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-2411
  Email: info@pa.gov.mp

Office of the Public Defender
- Monday - Friday
  9:00 AM - 3:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 234-6503

SOCIAL DISTANCING TO BE IMPLEMENTED AT ALL OFFICES

GOVERNOR'S COVID-19 TASK FORCE HOTLINE TEL: (670) 287-0046

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COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

GOVERNMENT RESOURCE LISTING PAGE 2 MAY 21, 2020, 11:30 AM

Department of Finance
- ***Division of Revenue & Taxation***
  Monday - Friday
  8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-1000
- ***ALL OTHER DIVISIONS (Except Customs)***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
- ***Division of Customs Services***
  - ***Airport:*** OPEN DAILY
    8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
  - ***Seaport:*** Monday - Friday
    8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
  - ***Chalan Kanoa Post Office:***
    Monday - Friday 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
    Saturday 7:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Department of Public Lands
- ***Cashier accepting payments:***
  Monday - Friday, 8:30 AM - 3:30 PM
- ***Available via phone or email:***
  Monday - Friday, 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 234-3751/52/53/54
  For appointments call (670) 234-3751 or email dpl@dpl.gov.mp

Saipan Zoning Office
- ***Available via phone ONLY:***
  Monday - Thursday
  7:30 AM - 11:30 AM
  Tel: (670) 234-9661/ 9662/ 9663
  Email: geri.delacruz@zoning.gov.mp

CNMI 2020 Census
- Monday – Friday
  7:30 AM – 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 682-2020
  Email: cnmi@2020census.gov

Department of Public Safety
- ***Bureau of Motor Vehicle (BMV)***
  - ***Document Drop-Off For Vehicle / Watercraft Registration Renewal***
    Monday - Thursday
    8:00 AM - 11:00 AM
    Tel: (670) 664-9068
  - ***Walk-In For Drivers License***
    Monday - Thursday
    8:00 AM - 11:00 AM
    Tel: (670) 664-9066
- ***Firearms and Records***
  Monday - Thursday
  9:00 AM - 3:00 PM (For Walk-Ins)
  Tel: (670) 664-9072
- ***Highway Safety Office***
  Monday - Thursday (For Walk-Ins)
  9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-9121 / 9125 / 9131

Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services
- ***Fire Enforcement Office***
  Monday - Thursday
  7:30 AM - 4:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-9178

Commonwealth Bureau of Military Affairs
- Monday – Friday
  7:30 AM – 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 488-2200 / 0440 / 0550
  Email: glenna.reyes@gov.mp

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Business

Hertz business as usual in Micronesia

The company that owns the franchise for Hertz Rent-A-Car in Micronesia assured the public that Hertz Global Holdings' Chapter 11 filing in the U.S. will not affect operations in the region.

"We would like to assure our customers and vendors that the Chapter 11 filing by Hertz Global Holdings will not have any impact on our operations in Guam or Saipan. We are and will continue to be open for business," said Triple J Rentals president Jeff Jones in a statement.

Triple J Rentals owns the Hertz franchises on Guam, Saipan, and Palau.

Hertz APAC vice president Eoin MacNeill also said in a statement that Hertz's operations in Asia will also not be affected by its parent company's Chapter 11 filing.

"The short term self-drive vehicle rental industry, of which Hertz is a key player, has been deeply impacted around the world by the COVID-19 pandemic and the consequent downturn in domestic and international travel. However, Hertz continues to operate as normal in Asia. This includes the following countries and regions; Singapore, Guam, Saipan, Thailand, Malaysia, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Brunei, Pakistan, Cambodia, Vietnam, Macao, Japan, Philippines, Korea, and India."

MacNeill added that the decision by Hertz Global Holdings and certain U.S. and Canadian subsidiaries to voluntarily file for reorganization under Chapter 11 in the U.S. courts has no material impact on Hertz operations in Asia which each operate under franchise arrangements.

"Customers can expect the same high level of service and reliability with enhanced cleaning protocols for extra peace of mind and Hertz loyalty program points and rewards are not affected. It's business as usual for Hertz in Asia," he said.

Hertz locations are open across the APAC region and ready to help customers with their rental needs—whether for business or leisure purposes. All Hertz reservation, loyalty and customer programs continue to operate, including Hertz Gold Plus Rewards as well as rewards, coupon, and voucher programs.

Hertz Rent-A-Car parking spot at the Francisco C. Ada-Saipan International Airport. KRIZEL TUASON

"Since the pandemic began, we have undertaken a range of measures to reduce costs and ensure we keep the business as robust as possible in both markets. We have cut all discretionary spending, reduced labor costs, and sought new rental agreements with landlords. We have also been de-fleeting our network, and de-registering unused vehicles," said MacNeill.

He added that the term Chapter 11 is specific to the U.S. legal environment and describes the move by a company to file for protection while management works on a financial restructure. It does not equate to bankruptcy, in the sense that many people understand that word.

The decision by the U.S. organization to enter Chapter 11 will no doubt provide positive benefits in the medium-longer term as it will allow the Hertz business to continue operating while it deals with the continuing effects of coronavirus and positions itself for growth. So effectively it's business as usual for Hertz APAC, as we look to prepare our operations for the recovery phase as lock-downs are lifted and corporate and leisure travelers start to return to the market, according to MacNeill.

"We are confident we're taking the right steps to protect Hertz across the APAC region for the economic rebound and we'd like to thank our franchisees, staff and valued customers for their continuing support," he said. ***(Saipan Tribune/PR)***

DOCOMO PACIFIC donates KN95 masks to Guam, CNMI front-liners

TAMUNING, Guam—DOCOMO PACIFIC, regional leader in innovation, telecommunications, and entertainment, donated 3,550 KN95 masks to Guam and CNMI front-liners during this ongoing outbreak of COVID-19.

According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, KN95 masks are considered the gold standard of respiratory masks as they filter out at least 95% of very small particles from the air. Since the quarantine began in March, these masks have been in high demand, causing shortages in supply. The donation list included:

- 1,770 to Guam Homeland Security
- 700 to St. Dominic's Senior Care Home
- 700 to Catholic Social Services
- 180 to Kamalen Karidat
- 200 to CNMI first-responders

"We want to thank DOCOMO PACIFIC for their large donation of masks. The masks provided will be used to protect Guam's front liners and first responders. We are grateful to have private partners like DOCOMO PACIFIC support us during emergencies and disasters," said Office of Civil Defense administrator Charles V. Esteves.

DOCOMO PACIFIC is a wholly owned subsidiary of NTT DOCOMO, Japan's leading mobile operator. Headquartered in Tamuning, Guam, DOCOMO PACIFIC is the largest provider of personal, residential, enterprise connectivity and entertainment services in Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. Named Guam's most reliable network with the fastest speeds and best coverage by GWS in 2019, we are also the 4-time winner of Pika's Best of Guam, 4-time winner of Best of The Pacific. DOCOMO PACIFIC is dedicated to bringing you and your family closer to the things that matter most. Get to know more about what makes us "Better Together" at www.docomopacific.com. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
From left, Lisa Salisbury, Enterprise brand owner, DOCOMO PACIFIC; Nathan Denight, Enterprise marketing director, DOCOMO PACIFIC; Charles Esteves, administrator, Office of Civil Defense; and Jaime Ann Harris-Cruz, program coordinator, Office of Civil Defense.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
From left, Dee Perez-Damian, brand director, DOCOMO PACIFIC; Roderick Boss, chief executive officer, DOCOMO PACIFIC; Jay Phillip, maintenance, CSS; and Diana Calvo, executive director, CSS.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
From left, Ruth Alcoran, secretary, SDSCH; Roderick Boss, chief executive officer, DOCOMO PACIFIC; and Dee Perez-Damian, brand director, DOCOMO PACIFIC.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
From left, Doris Royal, program director, Kamalen Karidat; and Roderick Boss, chief executive officer, DOCOMO PACIFIC.

STOCK PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
24,995.11	2,991.77	9,340.22
+529.95	+36.32	+15.63
2.17%)	1.23%	0.17%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	1.5057	Hong Kong Dollar	7.7523	Russian Ruble	69.7814
British Pound	0.8114	Indian Rupee	75.0456	Singapore Dollar	1.4191
Canadian Dollar	1.3780	Japanese Yen	107.4980	South Korean Won	1207.76
Chinese Yuan	7.0447	Malaysian Ringgit	4.3099	Swiss Franc	0.9666
Euro	0.9126	New Zealand Dollar	1.6142	Taiwan Dollar	29.5178
		Philippine Peso	49.6055	Thailand Baht	31.8480

Nation

Can Trump feel your pain? US nears haunting virus milestone

AP
President Donald Trump arrives to speak at an event on protecting seniors with diabetes in the Rose Garden White House, Tuesday, May 26, 2020, in Washington.

WASHINGTON (AP)—In the rubble of buildings and lives, modern U.S. presidents have met national trauma with words such as these: "I can hear you." "You have lost too much, but you have not lost everything." "We have wept with you; we've pulled our children tight."

As diverse as they were in eloquence and empathy, George W. Bush, Bill Clinton and Barack Obama each had his own way of piercing the noise of catastrophe and reaching people.

But now, the known U.S. death toll from the coronavirus pandemic is fast approaching 100,000 on the watch of a president whose communication skills, potent in a political brawl, are not made for this moment.

Impeachment placed one indelible mark on Donald Trump's time in the White House. Now there is another, a still-growing American casualty list that has exceeded deaths from the Vietnam and Korean wars combined. U.S. fatalities from the most lethal hurricanes and earthquakes pale by comparison. This is the deadliest pandemic in a century.

Actual deaths from COVID-19 are almost certainly higher than the numbers show, an undercount to be corrected in time.

At every turn Trump has asserted the numbers would be worse without his leadership. Yet the toll keeps climbing. It is well beyond what he told people to expect even as his public-health authorities started bracing the country in early April for at least 100,000 deaths.

"I think we'll be substantially under that number," he said April 10." Ten days later: "We're going toward 50- or 60,000 people." Ten days after that: "We're probably heading to 60,000, 70,000." Though critics have said the toll shot up because he was slow to respond, he contended Tuesday it could have been 25 times higher without his actions.

The scale and swiftness of the pandemic's killing are unlike anything that confronted Trump's recent predecessors. Yet the calamity offers no where-were-you moment—no flashpoint turning blue skies black, no fusillade at an elementary school. Instead the toll unfolds in stages of sickness.

The pandemic is playing out in a divided country under a president who thrives on rousing his supporters and getting a rise out of those who don't like him, whether that means forgoing a mask, playing golf while millions hunker down or thrashing opponents on Twitter. He lowered flags to half staff to recognize those who have died from the virus but had them back up days before the 100,000 marker was reached.

His feelings on Tuesday? He tweeted to "all the political hacks out there" that without his leadership the lives lost would be far worse than the "100,000 plus that looks like will be the number."

Early on, when only a few hundred had died, Trump was asked at a briefing what message he had for Americans who were scared. "You're a terrible reporter, that's what I say," he responded. "I think it's a very nasty question."

In the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the 2012 mass shooting at Sandy Hook school and other national nightmares that brought flags to half staff, presidents found more soothing words for the frightened and grieving than Trump's boilerplate line that one death is too many.

Empathy was Clinton's wheelhouse. The rhetorically fumbly Bush grabbed eloquence by the bullhorn. The cool and controlled Obama cried.

Trump? "I've never seen a president with less capacity for empathy," said Andrew J. Polsky, a political science professor at Hunter College, City University of New York, who has studied such leadership traits for decades. "He doesn't even try. ... It's way outside his emotional comfort zone."

Clinton's touchy-feely ways are forever symbolized by his assurance that "I feel your pain," which did not come from a tragic moment at all but rather an epic smackdown of a heckler. Challenged by an AIDS activist in New York in 1992 who said the Democratic candidate was more about ambition than achievement, Clinton told the man "I know how it hurts ... I feel your pain" but "quit talking to me like that."

Biden knocks Trump for 'this macho stuff' in shunning masks

WASHINGTON (AP)—Joe Biden said Tuesday that wearing a mask in public to combat the spread of the coronavirus is a sign of leadership and called President Donald Trump a "fool" who was "stoking deaths" for suggesting otherwise.

The presumptive Democratic presidential nominee's comments came a day after he wore a black face mask while making his first public appearance in more than two months. Biden has remained at his Delaware home amid a pandemic that has frozen the presidential campaign, but he marked Memorial Day by laying a wreath at a nearby veterans' memorial with his wife, Jill.

Trump later retweeted a post that appeared to make fun of a photo of Biden in his mask, though he later said he didn't mean to be critical. In an interview with CNN, Biden responded, "He's a fool, an absolute fool, to talk that way."

"He's supposed to lead by example," Biden said. The former vice president also noted that nearly 100,000 Americans have been killed by the virus and suggested that as many as half of those deaths were avoidable but for Trump's "lack of attention and ego."

Federal officials have recommended that people cover their nose and mouth in public when other measures, such as practicing social distancing of at least 6 feet (1.8 meters), aren't possible. But the issue has become increasingly politically charged, with Trump refusing to wear a mask and polls finding that conservative Americans are more likely to forgo them as well.

Biden didn't wear a mask during the CNN interview, which was conducted outside his house, but he sat 12 feet (3.6 meters) from the reporter.

"It's just absolutely this macho stuff," Biden said of Trump bristling at wearing a mask in public, a practice the former vice president called being "falsely masculine." "It's cost people's lives."

Biden added that the president is politicizing the issue and "it's stoking deaths. That's not going to increase the likelihood that people are going to be better off."

After Biden wore the mask on Memorial Day, Trump retweeted a post by a political commentator that featured an image of a masked Biden over the comment, "This might help explain why Trump doesn't like to wear a mask in public." Asked about that during a subsequent event in the White House Rose Garden, the president responded, "Biden can wear a mask."

"But he was standing outside with his wife, perfect conditions, perfect weather," Trump said. "They're inside, they don't wear masks and so I thought it was very unusual that he had one on. But I thought that was fine. I wasn't criticizing him at all. Why would I ever do a thing like that?"

Trump then asked the reporter who was following up with a second question to remove the mask he was wearing, complaining he couldn't hear him. When the reporter instead said he would speak louder, the president replied: "Oh, OK, 'cause you want to be politically correct."

Federal guidance does not recommend that people wear masks when at home. Still, White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany used the same line of argument on Tuesday. She noted that Biden has foregone a mask while appearing for frequent online events from his home, something he did during a virtual fundraiser held Tuesday night.

"It is a bit peculiar," McEnany said. "That in his basement, right next to his wife, he's not wearing a mask. But he's wearing one outdoors when he's socially distant. So I think that there was a discrepancy there."

Swift firings for Minneapolis officers in death of black man

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—To the general public, the video of a white police officer pressing his knee into the neck of a shirtless black man prone on the street, crying out for help until he finally stopped moving, was horrifying.

Four officers were fired a day after George Floyd's death, a stunning and swift move by the Minneapolis chief with the mayor's full backing. But despite their dismissal, whether the incident will be considered criminal, or even excessive force, is a more complicated question that will likely take months to investigate.

The officers were dismissed soon after a bystander's video taken outside a south Minneapolis grocery store Monday night showed an officer kneeling on the handcuffed man's neck, even after he pleaded that he could not breathe and stopped moving.

Mayor Jacob Frey announced the firings on Twitter, saying: "This is the right call."

The FBI and state law enforcement were investigating Floyd's death, which immediately drew comparisons to the case of Eric Garner, an unarmed black man who died in 2014 in New York after he was placed in a chokehold by police and pleaded for his life, saying he could not breathe.

But in the Garner case, local prosecutors, the NYPD's internal affairs unit, and the Justice Department all finished investigations into the case before the officer was ultimately fired. Garner's family and activists spent years begging for the officer to be removed.

The officers in the Minneapolis incident haven't even been publicly identified, though one defense attorney has confirmed he is representing Derek Chauvin, the officer seen with his knee on Floyd's neck. The attorney, Tom Kelly, declined to comment further.

The police union asked the public to wait for the investigation to take its course and not to "rush to judgment and immediately condemn our officers." Messages left with the union after the firings were not returned.

Asia

Philippines trying to ease quarantine congestion

BANGKOK (AP)—As about 24,000 Filipinos who lost their jobs abroad are being transported by land, sea or air to their provincial homes, the president warned local officials not to refuse them entry out of coronavirus fears.

The workers returned to the country in recent months as jobs dried up worldwide due to the pandemic. They were quarantined for two weeks in hospitals, hotels and makeshift isolation centers in metropolitan Manila in a chaotic situation that delayed their trip home and sparked a myriad of complaints. Some had to wait for weeks for their coronavirus test results, but everyone being released has tested negative.

President Rodrigo Duterte said Monday night that some provincial officials have refused entry to returning workers from abroad. Authorities have been trying to reduce crowding in quarantine facilities in the capital because about 300,000 more displaced Filipino workers are slated to come home soon.

"I'm ordering you to accept them, open the gates of your territories," Duterte said. "Do not impede it. Do not obstruct the movement of people because you run the risk of getting sued criminally."

The Philippines is a leading source of global labor.

In other developments in the Asia-Pacific region:

— INDIAN CASES SURGE AGAIN: For a seventh consecutive day India reported a record single-day jump in new virus cases. The health ministry counted a total of 145,380 cases, a one-day gain of 6,535, and said 4,167 people had died. Most of the cases are concentrated in two neighboring states in central India, Maharashtra, home to financial hub Mumbai, and Gujarat, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state. An uptick of cases has also been reported in some of India's poorest eastern states as migrant workers returning to native villages from cities have begun arriving home on special trains. India has been easing its lockdown, with domestic flights resuming Monday at a fraction of normal.

— THAILAND EXTENDS STATE OF EMERGENCY: Thailand's Cabinet has agreed to extend until the end of June a nationwide state of emergency that was imposed to combat the spread of the virus. The extension was approved amid mounting criticism that its real purpose is to curb political activity. Political and human rights activists have been warning that the broad powers authorized under the emergency decree, such as limitations on speech and gatherings, could be used to silence critics of the government. Thailand has seen single-digit increases in the number of new virus cases for several weeks, and has been gradually easing restrictions on gatherings and travel. It has confirmed a total of 3,045 cases, including 57 deaths.

— 19 NEW CASES IN SOUTH KOREA: South Korea is continuing to trace new virus infections and preparing for more students to return to school. Most of the 19 new cases reported Tuesday were from the Seoul area, where officials are tracing transmissions linked to nightclubs and other entertainment venues. The new infections caused concern as the phased reopening of schools began last week. Around 2.4 million students are to return to school on Wednesday. Health Minister Park Neung-hoo urged school officials to double-check their preventive measures. South Korea also is requiring masks on public transit and in taxis. People have generally worn masks in public settings and no major disruptions were reported. After initial shortages, South Korea's mask supply has now stabilized and people can buy three masks per week.

An overseas Filipino worker, who got quarantined as they arrived in the country weeks ago, rests beside his bags while they wait for their free ride back to their provinces on Tuesday, May 26, 2020 in Manila, Philippines. AP

Hong Kong leader says security law not a threat to freedoms

HONG KONG (AP)—Hong Kong's leader said Tuesday that national security legislation proposed by China's legislature will not threaten the semi-autonomous territory's civil rights, despite widespread criticism of the move as an encroachment on freedom of speech and assembly.

The city's chief executive, Carrie Lam, told reporters that there was "no need for us to worry" over the move being considered by China's ceremonial National People's Congress.

"Hong Kong has proven that we uphold and preserve those values," Lam said. "Hong Kong needs this piece of legislation for the bigger benefit of the great majority of Hong Kong people."

Lam also said that transit service would resume at Hong Kong's international airport on June 1, but that foreigners would still be banned from entering the city as part of measures to prevent a new wave of coronavirus infections.

In Washington, White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany said Tuesday that President Donald Trump is "displeased with China's efforts and that it's hard to see how Hong Kong can remain a financial hub, if China takes over." She declined to elaborate when asked to explain the statement further.

The move by China to pass the legislation signals the central government's determination to take greater control of Hong Kong after months of pro-democracy protests last year. Beijing has appointed new representatives in Hong Kong who follow the hard line laid down by Chinese President Xi Jinping, who is also the head of the ruling Communist Party.

Such a move has long been under consideration and was hastened by last year's street protests in the former British colony, which was returned to Chinese rule in 1997. Beijing promised that the territory could retain its own relatively liberal civil, legal and economic systems that contrast starkly with the much more centrally controlled and authoritarian system in mainland China.

Some "foreign politicians" have "expressed untrue opinions" about the plan to impose the law on Hong Kong, Lam said, without giving details.

She repeated claims that the law would only target "a minority," citing concerns about terrorism and subversion.

Protesters have returned to Hong Kong's streets to oppose the legislation, with thousands turning out on Sunday as police fired tear gas and deployed a water cannon to disperse the crowds. On Tuesday, over 100 protesters gathered at a luxury shopping mall in Hong Kong's Central business district, condemning Lam and her administration.

UN probe: Both Koreas violate armistice in gunfire exchange

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—A U.N. investigation into a recent exchange of gunfire between the two Koreas has determined that both countries violated the armistice that ended the 1950-53 Korean War, the American-led U.N. Command said Tuesday.

The May 3 gunfire exchange was the first shooting inside the Korean Demilitarized Zone in about 2½ years. There were no known casualties on either side.

The DMZ, which was established as a buffer at the end of the Korean War, is a de facto border separating North and South Korea. It is officially jointly overseen by North Korea and the U.N. Command.

The U.N. Command said in a statement that a multinational special investigation team led the probe with the full cooperation of the South Korean military. It said it invited North Korea to provide information on the incident but the country hasn't offered a formal response.

The investigation ruled that North Korea breached the armistice by firing four rounds and South Korea by returning fire, according to the statement. It said the investigation was unable to determine if the North Korean rounds were fired intentionally or by mistake.

South Korea's Defense Ministry expressed regret that the U.N. Command reached the conclusion without investigating North Korea, which the South says fired first. In a statement, the ministry said South Korean troops were reacting in accordance with a response manual and that the South's military is committed to government goals of promoting peace and easing tensions along the border.

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT

†RICHARD MICHAEL JONES

Richard Jones was born on May 27, 1947 in Pasadena, California and died after a long illness at his home on Saipan on May 12, 2020.

He lives in the loving memory of:
His wife and companion of 50 years FAYE CROZAT
His brothers CRAIG JONES and MARK JONES

His in laws:
DAVID AND FAYTHE WISEMAN
TONDALAYA AND RON GILLESPIE
CLAUDETTE AND JIM SECHLER
MARINO AND PAT CROZAT

And in the hearts of friends, companions, and colleagues that he gathered in the many places that he made his home. Richard will be laid to rest in a private ceremony of sea burial on May 30, 2020. Condolences may be sent to his wife Faye at fayecrozat@gmail.com.

World

AS COVID-19 PANDEMIC RAGES

Chile's hospital ICUs near full capacity

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP)—Intensive care units in Chile's hospitals are nearly at capacity amid a flood of coronavirus patients, authorities said Tuesday, and doctors are having to make wrenching choices over which patients should get available beds.

Health officials said 95% of the country's 2,400 ICU beds are occupied even after a doubling of capacity from the levels in March. They announced plans to add 400 more critical care beds in the coming days.

"This is an extraordinarily difficult time," Health Minister Jaime Mañalich said.

A nation of 18 million people, Chile has the third most coronavirus cases in the region, after Brazil and Peru, with an average of 4,000 new infections reported daily. About 15% of the cases require hospitalization.

That is forcing Chilean physicians to face a dilemma that previously confronted doctors in hard-hit nations like Italy and Spain: Which patient with coronavirus should be given the last available bed?

Khaty Barriga, mayor of the populous commune of Maipú, said there was only one respirator free for use Tuesday at the El Carmen de Maipú hospital.

His area is part of the Santiago metropolitan region, which has had more than 80% of the nearly 78,000 coronavirus cases and just over 800 deaths recorded in Chile.

Dr. Claudia Vega, head of the hospital's ICU, had said Monday in a television interview that "right now I am choosing which bed is going to be vacated and choose the right person, which is the right one."

"May God enlighten me in this," she said.

The Chilean Society of Intensive Medicine, which consults with hundreds of hospitals and clinics daily, said the occupancy of critical care beds in the greater Santiago area stood at 97%. A report from the University of Chile said the increase in new cases "suggests a possible complete saturation of the system this week."

The Santiago region is home to 8 million people, who have been under mandatory orders for isolation at home for 11 days. Except for a 10 p.m.-5 a.m. curfew, residents are allowed to obtain permission online to venture outside to perform necessary tasks, such as grocery shopping and taking pets for brief walks.

Venezuela's apparent respite from COVID-19 may not last long

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—Defying dire predictions, Venezuela so far seems to have avoided the coronavirus wave striking much of South America.

But experts warn that while the virus may have been slow to spread here, due in large part to Venezuela's isolation, the number of daily illnesses could soon climb high enough to severely test the country's already dilapidated health system.

President Nicolás Maduro's government says the nation of roughly 25 million people has done widespread testing while recording just over 1,200 virus cases, along with 11 deaths, since the first case was diagnosed in mid-March.

The low figures raise doubt among some critics about the accuracy of the testing program and government reporting. Other independent health experts, however, don't think Maduro could conceal a significant surge in cases.

"If things were worse than they are now, we would have seen a lot coming out from social media—people talking about the increase of cases, hospitals being overrun," said Dr. Gerardo de Cosío, the Caracas-based head of the Venezuela office of the Pan American Health Organization and the World Health Organization.

Neighboring Brazil has seen more than 270,000 cases and nearly 20,000 deaths so far, while Peru, Chile and Ecuador have each had tens of thousands of cases. There have been thousands of deaths in Peru and Ecuador and hundreds in Chile.

In Venezuela, officials had been reporting under a dozen new illnesses daily. But that's started creeping upward, and new illnesses now exceed 100 some days.

The rise is worrying many observers.

New York-based Human Rights Watch and Johns Hopkins University's Center for Public Health and Human Rights and Center for Humanitarian Health reported Tuesday that Venezuela's health care system is "grossly unprepared" for the pandemic's arrival.

A main concern is a lack of running water.

The report cited a hospital that officials identified as needing better water services. However, human rights investigators found that nearly a year after work began in mid-2019, the hospital still doesn't have consistent running water or access to potable supplies—despite being designated as one of 46 hospitals in Venezuela to treat coronavirus patients.

At another hospital, investigators said, health care workers wash their hands with condensation that drips from the air conditioner. Some of its patients are told to bring their own water to drink and flush toilets.

José Miguel Vivanco, Americas director of Human Rights Watch, said these conditions create a "time bomb" in Venezuela.

"Maduro's statistics are absolutely absurd," Vivanco said. "They are not credible in a country where doctors do not even have water to wash their hands."

Venezuela was wealthy two decades ago from the world's largest oil reserves. It's since fallen on hard times as crude oil production has fallen to a 76-year low. Critics of the socialist government blame its interference in the economy. Maduro blames what he calls economic war being waged on Venezuela by the U.S. and others.

An estimated 5 million Venezuelans have fled poverty, blackouts, sporadic running water, shortages of food, medicine and gasoline, and high inflation. Thousands of doctors and nurses have joined the exodus.

The Academy of Sciences, Physics, Mathematics and Nature of Venezuela, a Caracas-based institution, said mathematical models based on the first six weeks of infections forecast a big surge in new cases in the coming months.

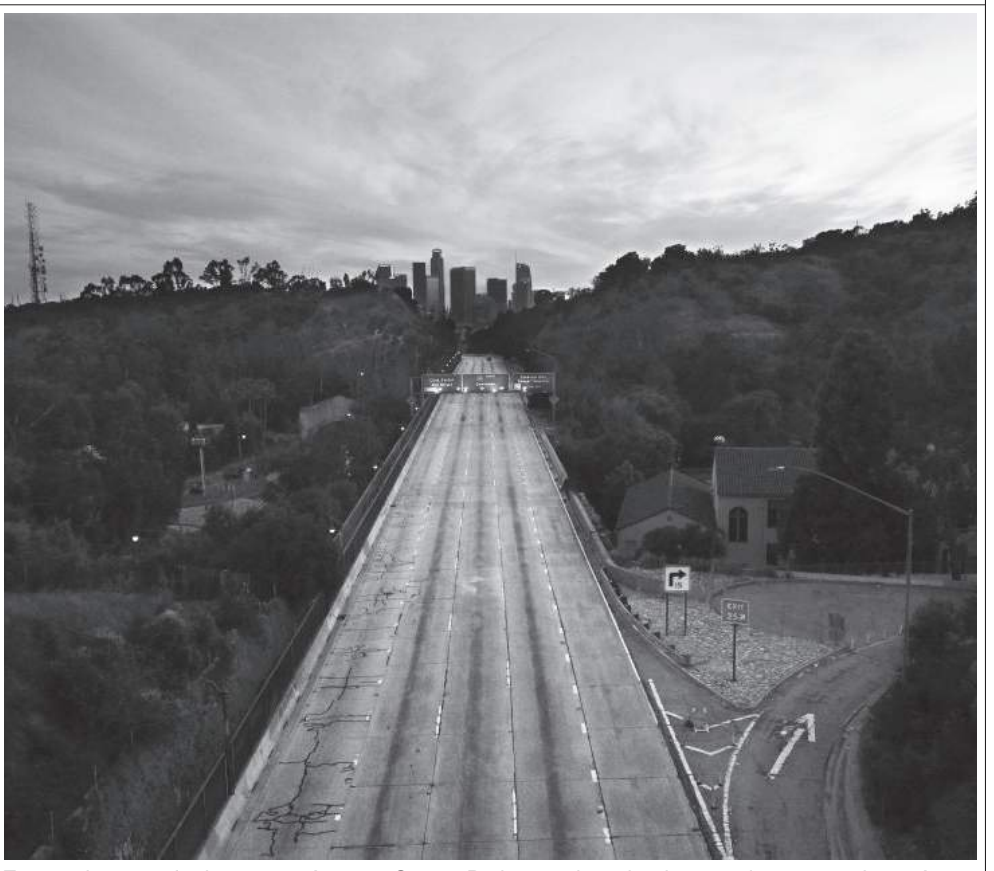
"The country must prepare for the peak of the epidemic, as has happened in other Latin American countries," said the academy's president, Mireya Goldwasser.

That report drew a threat from Diosdado Cabello, the socialist party leader who is Venezuela's second most powerful official after Maduro. Cabello called the scientists politically motivated on his weekly TV show and accused them of generating alarm.

"This is an invitation for state security agencies to come calling on these people," Cabello said. "They're saying the government lied."

Skeptical Venezuelans distrust the government's claims that so few coronavirus cases exist, given its history of hiding basic figures. Still, no obvious signs indicate the coronavirus has spun out of control.

Environment



Empty lanes of the 110 Arroyo Seco Parkway that leads to downtown Los Angeles are seen in April during the coronavirus outbreak in Los Angeles, Calif. AP

Study: World carbon pollution falls 17% during pandemic peak

KENSINGTON, Maryland (AP)—The world cut its daily carbon dioxide emissions by 17% at the peak of the pandemic shutdown last month, a new study found.

But with life and heat-trapping gas levels inching back toward normal, the brief pollution break will likely be "a drop in the ocean" when it comes to climate change, scientists said.

In their study of carbon dioxide emissions during the coronavirus pandemic, an international team of scientists calculated that pollution levels are heading back up—and for the year will end up between 4% and 7% lower than 2019 levels. That's still the biggest annual drop in carbon emissions since World War II.

It'll be 7% if the strictest lockdown rules remain all year long across much of the globe, 4% if they are lifted soon.

For a week in April, the United States cut its carbon dioxide levels by about one-third. China, the world's biggest emitter of heat-trapping gases, sliced its carbon pollution by nearly a quarter in February, according to a study Tuesday in the journal Nature Climate Change. India and Europe cut emissions by 26% and 27% respectively.

The biggest global drop was from April 4 through 9 when the world was spewing 18.7 million tons (17 million metric tons) of carbon pollution a day less than it was doing on New Year's Day.

Such low global emission levels haven't been recorded since 2006. But if the world returns to its slowly increasing pollution levels next year, the temporary reduction amounts to ''a drop in the ocean," said study lead author Corinne LeQuere, a climate scientist at the University of East Anglia.

"It's like you have a bath filled with water and you're turning off the tap for 10 seconds," she said.

By April 30, the world carbon pollution levels had grown by 3.3 million tons (3 million metric tons) a day from its low point earlier in the month. Carbon dioxide stays in the air for about a century.

Outside experts praised the study as the most comprehensive yet, saying it shows how much effort is needed to prevent dangerous levels of further global warming.

"That underscores a simple truth: Individual behavior alone ... won't get us there," Pennsylvania State University climate scientist Michael Mann, who wasn't part of the study, said in an email. "We need fundamental structural change."

If the world could keep up annual emission cuts like this without a pandemic for a couple decades, there's a decent chance Earth can avoid warming another 1.8 degrees (1 degree Celsius) of warming from now, study authors said. But getting the type of yearly cuts to reach that international goal is unlikely, they said.

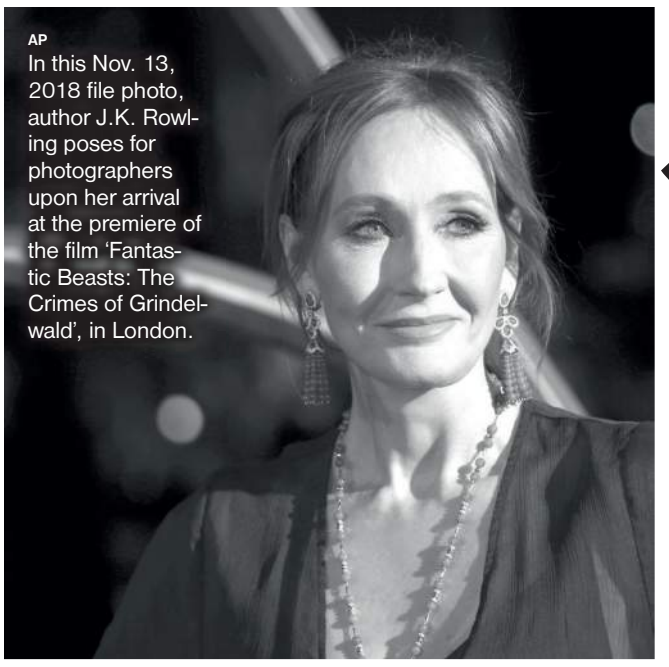
If next year returns to 2019 pollution levels, it means the world has only bought about a year's delay in hitting the extra 1.8 degrees (1 degree Celsius) of warming that leaders are trying to avoid, LeQuere said. That level could still occur anywhere from 2050 to 2070, the authors said.

The study was carried out by Global Carbon Project, a consortium of international scientists that produces the authoritative annual estimate of carbon dioxide emissions. They looked at 450 databases showing daily energy use and introduced a measurement scale for pandemic-related societal "confinement" in its estimates.

Nearly half the emission reductions came from less transportation pollution, mostly involving cars and trucks, the authors said. By contrast, the study found that drastic reductions in air travel only accounted for 10% of the overall pollution drop.

In the U.S., the biggest pollution declines were seen in California and Washington with plunges of more than 40%.

Life & Style



AP
In this Nov. 13, 2018 file photo, author J.K. Rowling poses for photographers upon her arrival at the premiere of the film 'Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald', in London.

JK Rowling

publishes first chapters of new story online

LONDON (AP)—J.K. Rowling is publishing a new story called "The Ickabog," which will be free to read online to help entertain children and families stuck at home during the coronavirus pandemic.

The "Harry Potter" author said Tuesday she wrote the fairy tale for her children as a bedtime story over a decade ago. Set in an imaginary land, it is a stand-alone story "about truth and the abuse of power" for children from 7 to 9 years old and is unrelated to Rowling's other books.

Rowling said the draft of the story had stayed in her attic while she focused on writing books for adults. She said her children, now teenagers, were "touchingly enthusiastic" when she recently suggested retrieving the story and publishing it for free.

"For the last few weeks I've been immersed in a fictional world I thought I'd never enter again. As I worked to finish the book, I started reading chapters nightly to the family again," she said.

"'The Ickabog's first two readers told me what they remember from when they were tiny, and demanded the reinstatement of bits they'd particularly liked (I obeyed)."

The first two chapters were posted online Tuesday, with daily instalments to follow until July 10.

The book will be published in print later this year, and Rowling said she will pledge royalties from its sales to projects helping those particularly affected by the pandemic.

Wilson, Rapinoe, Bird to host remote ESPYS feting heroism

LOS ANGELES (AP)—It's a way different kind of year, and so The ESPYs will be, too. For the first time, the show will feature three hosts in remote settings and a changed focus. Instead of honoring the past year's top athletes and moments in sports, the show is celebrating heroism and humanitarian aid.

Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson, soccer star Megan Rapinoe and three-time WNBA champion Sue Bird will preside over the two-hour broadcast airing June 21 on ESPN. All three live in the Seattle area. Rapinoe and Bird are partners who share a household, which conveniently eases some logistics. Wilson's singer-wife, Ciara, is likely to make an appearance, too.

"We liked the idea of having athletes from diverse sports that represent something for every fan," show producer Jeff Smith said by phone. "We're finding ways to make this feel really connected to the audience. They're so ready to reach out to this community."

It's quite a departure from the red carpet strutting and 5,000 audience members at the show's longtime home in Los Angeles. Instead of its usual July date during baseball's All-Star break, the show has been rescheduled and re-imagined as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Smith said there's been a lot to learn in assembling a pre-produced show with everyone in different locations.

"Typically, we are all shoulder to shoulder and looking through cuts and arguing through story ideas," he said. "We found a different way to connect with each other."

Shortly before the U.S. shut down because of the coronavirus, the show suffered a blow when longtime executive producer Maura Mandt died unexpectedly at age 53 on Feb. 28.

"I wish we could have done this show together because she would have a really interesting perspective on how we're doing this," said Smith, who worked with Mandt at her production company. "This is the first one of its kind. Maura's signature will always be on this show."

The Arthur Ashe Award for Courage, the Pat Tillman Award for Service and Jimmy V Award for Perseverance are among the honors to be presented. But there won't be the usual long acceptance speeches read off the teleprompter.

The producers hope to show the winners getting a call informing them of the honor at the same time the audience finds out. That involves colluding with family and team members to lure them to a video screen at the appropriate moment.

Japan police arrest man in Kyoto anime arson that killed 36

TOKYO (AP)—Japanese police on Wednesday arrested a suspect in the deadly arson at a Kyoto anime studio last year after he recovered enough from his own severe burns to respond to the police investigation.

Kyoto police said they arrested Shinji Aoba, 42, on murder and arson allegations, 10 months after obtaining the warrant because they had to wait for Aoba to recover. Police also reportedly waited to arrest him until Japan's coronavirus emergency was fully lifted this week.

Aoba is accused of storming into Kyoto Animation's No. 1 studio on July 18 last year, setting it on fire and killing 36 people. The attack shocked Japan and drew an outpouring of grief from anime fans worldwide.

Police, quoting witnesses to the attack, have alleged Aoba arrived carrying two containers of flammable liquid, entered the studio's unlocked front door, dumped the liquid and set it afire with a lighter.

About 70 people were working inside the studio in southern Kyoto, Japan's ancient capital, at the time of the attack.

One of the survivors, an animator, told Japanese media he jumped from a window of the three-story building gasping for air amid scorching heat after seeing a "a black mushroom cloud" rising from downstairs.

Many others tried but failed to escape to the roof, fire officials said. Many died of carbon monoxide poisoning.

AP
Shinji Aoba on a stretcher is carried to Fushimi police station after being arrested in Kyoto, western Japan, Wednesday, May 27, 2020.

Wife can't shake distrust of husband caught in a lie

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I are 58 and getting ready to celebrate our first wedding anniversary. We knew each other in college, but were just friends back then. After college, we married others and raised children. We stayed married to our spouses for close to 30 years.

We reconnected eight years ago, started an affair and divorced our partners. Neither of us is proud of this. My adult children have accepted my husband. His refused to accept me, and only one of them has a relationship with him.

He was out of town recently, and I caught him in a lie about having invited a female former colleague to lunch with him. I was shocked and hurt because this is how our relationship started. He has apologized, but I can't get over the fact he lied to me, and it has caused a rift between us. He has always been honest with me, so I wonder why he lied about this woman.

I know I'm in no position to judge others. I can't afford counseling, and we don't belong to a church for spiritual help. I suffer from depression and anxiety (I am under the care of a doctor and take medication) but cannot shake the sadness. How can I ever trust my husband again?

HURTING HEART IN THE MOUNTAINS

DEAR HURTING HEART: In light of the way your affair with your husband began, he may have lied because he was afraid of upsetting you. A way to start this very necessary conversation would be to tell him how shaken you are that he wasn't truthful and try to get him to explain why he thought he had to lie. You should also ask if he thinks there is anything awry in your marriage.

If he tells you nothing is wrong and there is nothing he would change, believe him. However, if after that, you are still feeling insecure, ask the doctor who is treating your depression and anxiety to suggest some low-cost mental health/counseling services in your community.

DEAR ABBY: I need your advice about a problem I'm facing with a man I've been dating almost four years. When I met "Jeff," he had two older Yorkshire terriers. Both were very territorial and relieved themselves in the house. I told him I was concerned about moving in with him because of his out-of-control dogs, and he understood. They were older dogs, and I knew one day they would pass, so I waited patiently.

Then Jeff's neighbor passed away, leaving a dog. He adopted that dog, and it has become a bigger issue than the first two. The new dog is very aggressive. It tries to bite me and won't let me into certain rooms in the house! I expressed my concern to Jeff, but nothing has been done.

We are currently engaged but living separately. I told Jeff that we need to live together before getting married, so I gave him an ultimatum—try to find a home for the new dog and I'll move in.

That was two years ago, and nothing has been done. At this point, I suspect that he adopted the third dog without me knowing in order to prevent me from moving in. I feel like he chose the new dog over me! What do I do?

OVERLOOKED HUMAN IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR OVERLOOKED HUMAN: Listen to your intuition and accept that where you are concerned, Jeff has a commitment problem. If he wanted you to live with him, he would not have taken in an aggressive animal. Without saying it in words, he is sending you a strong message. From where I sit, you may have devoted enough time to a romance that's going nowhere. Give Jeff a choice: Kennel train the dog or the romance is over.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

DEAR ABBY

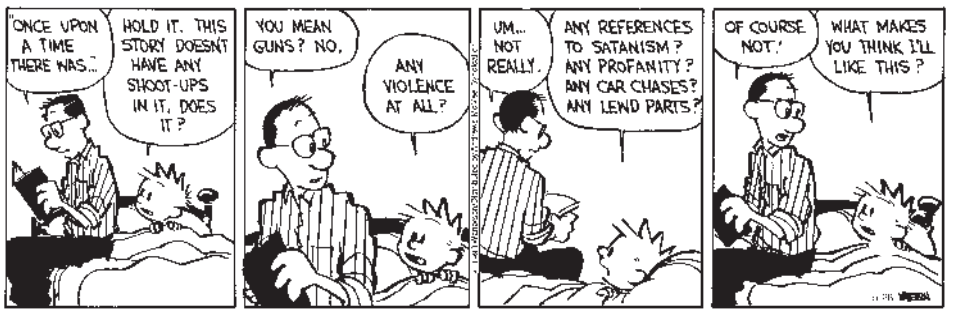
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


"ONCE UPON A TIME THERE WAS..
HOLD IT. THIS STORY DOESN'T HAVE ANY SHOOT-UPS IN IT, DOES IT?
YOU MEAN GUNS? NO.
ANY VIOLENCE AT ALL?
UM... NOT REALLY.
ANY REFERENCES TO SATANISM? ANY PROFANITY? ANY CAR CHASES? ANY LEWD PARTS?
OF COURSE NOT.
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I'LL LIKE THIS?

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

MR. ARBUCKLE, I SEE YOU'RE SCHEDULED FOR A CLAWING THIS AFTERNOON
I'M AFRAID I'LL HAVE TO CHARGE YOU FOR A CANCELED APPOINTMENT!
JIM DAVIS 5-28

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

WHY DO YOU NEED LOUD MUSIC FOR WRITING?
OH, I DON'T ALWAYS.
SOME JOBS REQUIRE SILENCE. SOME JOBS REQUIRE QUIET CLASSICAL MUSIC.
BUT THIS ONE NEEDS BLASTINGLY LOUD PUNK MUSIC.
TO GET YOUR JUICES FLOWING?
MORE TO KEEP ME AWAKE. DULL, DULL STUFF.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

DR. PHIL HAS A GUEST WHO'S NOT ONLY AFRAID OF CATCHING THE VIRUS, BUT ALSO HOARDS TOILET PAPER, HAS A MASK PHOBIA, AND WANTS PLASTIC SURGERY SO HE CAN LOOK LIKE DOCTOR FAUCI.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

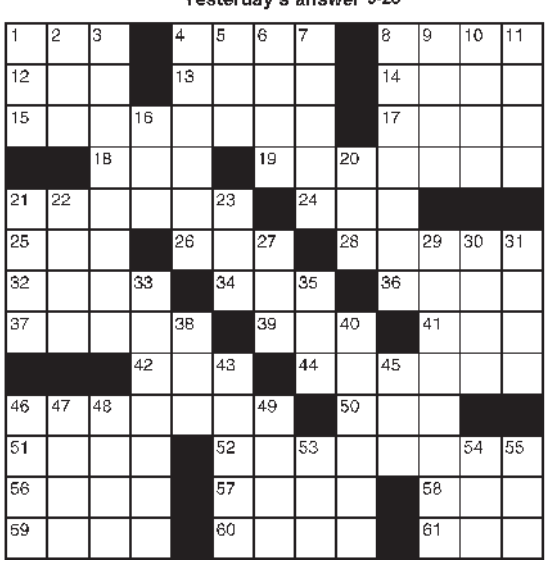
ACROSS
1 Solidify
4 Hawaiian coast
8 Herbal brews
12 "— been had!"
13 "Sad to say ..."
14 Pond growth
15 Most skeptical
17 Prejudice
18 Tank filler
19 Lacking purpose
21 Eden, for one
24 Scot's denial
25 Meadow
26 Squabble
28 Trattoria offering
32 Grecian vessels
34 Showbiz job
36 Atop
37 "Psycho" setting
39 "— the season ..."
41 Bank acct. entry
42 Corp. boss
44 Tent anchors
46 Neil Diamond hit
50 Have bills
51 Take the bait
52 One who signed up
56 Part of Q.E.D.
57 Scrambled wd.
58 Wapiti
59 Used car sites
60 Alaskan city
61 D followers

DOWN
1 Baseball's Hodges
2 Prior night
3 "Sham-poo" Oscar winner
4 Type of roll
5 World Cup cheer
6 Houston acronym
7 Sean of "Rudy"
8 Dramatic scene
9 Author Wiesel
10 Turkish officials
11 Get lippy
16 "Way cool!"
20 Pirate's chart
21 Morose
22 Plane-related
23 Eggy quaff
27 Humorist
29 "Clockers" director
30 Vocal quality
31 Pismires
33 Classified data
35 PX patrons
38 Luau souvenir
40 Fall guy
43 Whale's home
45 Piercing tool
46 First victim
47 Painter Joan
48 Coup d'—
49 Part of A.D.
53 Zodiac animal
54 Santa's helper
55 Heart chart (Abbr.)

Solution time: 24 mins.

B	O	D	■	E	T	T	A	■	C	O	O	L
E	S	E	■	I	R	O	N	■	A	A	H	E
A	L	L	■	H	A	N	D	S	F	R	E	E
K	O	A	L	A	■	■	S	I	T	■	■	■
■	■	■	E	N	O	S	■	R	A	V	E	D
E	Y	E	S	O	N	M	E	■	N	E	R	O
L	E	T	■	L	E	A	S	E	■	R	I	M
A	T	O	M	■	A	R	M	S	R	A	C	E
N	I	N	F	S	■	T	F	C	I	I	■	■
■	■	■	D	I	S	■	■	I	O	W	N	Y
I	I	F	A	D	S	I	I	C	M	F	■	R	F	A
O	V	A	L	■	I	S	A	W	■	I	L	K
E	A	S	E	■	N	U	T	S	■	T	I	S

Yesterday's answer 5-28



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Carey Mulligan, 35; Kylie Minogue, 52; Christa Miller, 56; Gladys Knight, 76.

Happy Birthday: A passionate approach to whatever you take on this year will draw interest and encouragement to finish what you start. You'll learn if you use a creative process to develop a plan that will address issues that have held you back in the past. Trust only well-sourced facts to avoid being taken advantage of or misled. Your numbers are 7, 13, 22, 28, 31, 35, 43.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Don't hesitate to make a change or share your thoughts with a close friend or lover. Set long-term goals that will give you something to look forward to achieving. Don't trust someone who has disappointed you. ✪✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Don't jump into something for the wrong reason. If your emotions are behind your desire for change, take a step back and consider what you want. A premature move will set you back. Don't let your heart rule your head. ✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Reasonable personal improvements will lift your spirits. A chance to make a change may entice you, but consider your motive or someone else's before you set your plans in motion. Moderation and a strict budget will be helpful. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Consider your options and how you see yourself moving forward. Paving the way to a better future doesn't always mean more money. Having peace of mind, doing something you enjoy and taking better care of your emotional well-being are priceless. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-August 22):* A change someone wants you to make will tempt you, but consider what's involved. Choose to bide your time. Look inward, and you'll discover what you can do to improve. Truthfulness and being realistic begin within. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(August 23-September 22):* Avoid getting involved in someone's problem. If you want to make a difference, consider the changes you can make to up your game. Learn something new, and expand your interests and skills. Apply your energy to physical fitness and better health. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Take greater interest in your creative endeavors. Look for innovative ways to share what you have to offer with others. Technology will play an active role in the way you use your strengths to get ahead. Romance and personal growth are encouraged. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Take a step back, and observe how others respond. Avoid an emotional situation that could cost you if you say or do the wrong thing. Focus on home and family and putting everything in its place. Protect your possessions and passwords. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Be open to suggestions, but don't be gullible. Don't expect everyone to be beneficial. Paying attention to the way you look and how you take care of your health and well-being will make a difference. Put your needs first. ✪✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Change begins within. Consider what you want to achieve and the best way to turn what you already have into what you desire. Discipline and hard work will pay off. Avoid situations that are physically compromising or could hurt your reputation. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Make your place comfortable and geared toward being more productive. Don't be fooled by someone's lavish plan or persuasive tactics to separate you from your money. A straightforward layout and small expenditure will be sufficient to satisfy your needs. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(February 19-March 20):* Take on only what's feasible. Honesty and integrity will be mandatory when dealing with others. Problems at home will arise if you can't get along with someone who lives with or near you. Set boundaries if necessary. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are intelligent, unpredictable and curious. You are helpful and approachable.

Visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

1			7		5			
				9		3		
		4	2					
9	4			8	7			1
2			6	3			7	5
		8		6	9	2		
			4		8			9

Difficulty Level ★★★ 5/28

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

6	4	5	2	3	1	9	8	7
1	2	8	4	9	7	6	5	3
9	7	3	8	5	6	2	4	1
7	8	4	3	6	2	1	9	5
3	5	1	9	7	8	4	2	6
2	6	9	5	1	4	3	7	8
5	1	2	7	4	3	8	6	9
8	3	7	6	2	9	5	1	4
4	9	6	1	8	5	7	3	2

Difficulty Level ★★★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

IT'S AN ASSEMBLAGE! Solution: 9 letters

M	P	E	O	P	L	E	Y	L	L	A	R	O	P	R
I	U	G	S	Y	N	O	D	C	E	S	T	R	A	P
X	O	P	E	N	B	B	O	D	Y	G	A	G	N	A
T	R	N	I	J	S	T	O	C	K	P	I	L	E	L
U	G	C	E	E	E	S	H	D	N	L	K	O	L	E
R	S	C	R	R	C	H	S	O	L	L	W	I	N	O
E	T	B	I	O	T	E	I	E	U	E	S	W	S	N
S	H	E	O	W	W	T	S	B	R	S	H	A	U	T
T	I	I	O	M	C	D	P	C	O	G	E	R	C	O
C	N	R	A	E	E	A	E	F	B	A	N	D	U	L
A	G	S	L	L	C	H	C	N	U	B	Z	O	A	O
F	S	L	E	K	Y	T	I	T	N	A	U	Q	C	G
O	O	U	G	N	I	R	E	H	T	A	G	L	E	Y
C	Z	L	A	I	C	O	S	P	O	O	R	T	C	D
E	C	N	E	I	D	U	A	S	S	E	M	B	L	Y

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Assembly, Audience, Band, Body, Bulk, Bunch, Caucus, Club, Collection, Congress, Coterie, Crew, Crowd, Deleuze, Draw, Ecofacts, Fossil, Gathering, Gilles, Group, Growth, Held, House, Legion, Mass, Mixtures, Mobs, Objects, Open, Pack, Paleontology, Panel, Parts, People, Pieces, Quantity, Rally, Social, Species, Stockpile, Synod, Things, Troops

Yesterday's Answer: Bathrooms

The NEW **Treasury 39** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

Cuban pitches idea for NBA play-in tournament

DALLAS—With momentum toward the return of the NBA gaining steam, Mark Cuban is weighing in with ideas.

The Dallas Mavericks owner envisions a truncated remainder of the regular season with a 20-team playoff including play-in games. He's not interested in a proposed round-robin group-stage format similar to the one used in World Cup play.

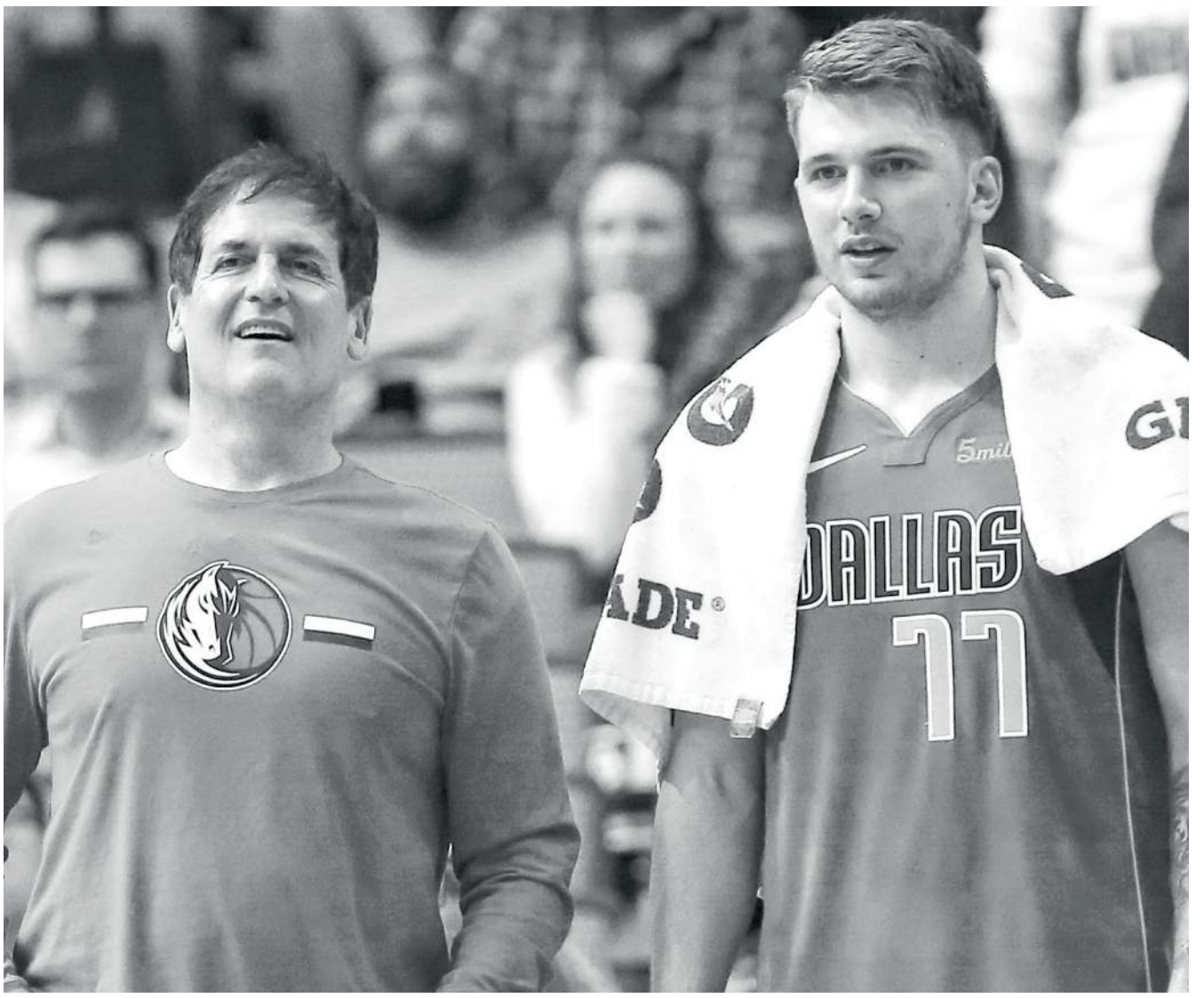
Cuban outlined his plan to ESPN on Tuesday.

He said that if the NBA does return, it must include all 30 teams, even those eliminated from the playoffs like the Golden State Warriors. According to ESPN, he was blunt about his reasoning. There's money to be made in fulfilling regional television contracts.

He did propose a carrot to teams further down the standings but still mathematically in the playoff hunt—an expanded playoff following a five-to-seven-game conclusion to the regular season.

Instead of 16 teams making the postseason, Cuban suggested a 20-team pool with the last four teams that qualify playing in a play-in tournament similar to that used in the NCAA tournament. The No. 20 seed would play the No. 17 seed and the No. 18 seed would play the No. 19 seed with the winners advancing to face the No. 15 and No. 16 seeds before the start of the actual playoffs. Those could be single game or best-of-three scenarios.

This would provide more incentive for someone like Portland Trail Blazers guard Damian Lillard, who said on Tuesday that he would not play without "an opportunity to make the playoffs." The Trail Blazers are currently ninth in the Western Conference standings, which would have them out of the playoffs in a traditional format.



AP
In this Nov. 18, 2019 file photo, Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban and Luka Doncic (77) watch the team's game against San Antonio Spurs in Dallas.

No conference playoffs

As for the conference standings, Cuban proposes taking the top 10 seeds from each conference rather than the teams with the 20 best records. But once the playoffs start, teams would be seeded by record. There would be no Eastern and Western Conference playoffs.

Once the playoffs start in full, teams would play best-of-seven series. This aligns with the traditional NBA playoff format and provides more opportunity to generate revenue. More games, more money.

No on World Cup-style format

As for the group-play proposal that was reported earlier on Tuesday? Cuban's not on board.

It "throws away the value of the whole season," Cuban told ESPN.

General managers have floated the idea of a round-robin scenario that would include anywhere between 16 and all 30 teams playing for eight spots in a bracketed tournament, according to ESPN's Adrian Wojnarowski.

The report also noted that several teams "were not initially enthusiastic" about the proposal, which was one of many being discussed. It sounds like this idea was dead on arrival.

There are many possibilities how to structure a group stage.

If the NBA locks into resuming with 20 teams, the other 10 teams would be incentivized to vote for whatever system generates the most revenue. Those 10 votes could boost any proposal that would otherwise be doomed by teams trying to clear their own path deep into the playoffs.

The draft order and lottery odds would have to be re-considered with a 20-team group phase. Though that's a minor issue, it'd involve every team. Again, self-interest would creep in.

This idea has some rough precedent. In 1954, the playoffs began with three-team round robins in each the East and West.

Meanwhile, the Detroit Pistons are beginning a search for a candidate who could became the team's general manager, according to a person with knowledge of the situation.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity Tuesday because the team had not announced its plans. Ed Stefanski, a senior advisor to owner Tom Gores, has been running basketball operations for the Pistons and will remain as the team's top basketball executive. Detroit is moving toward adding a general manager to the front office as well.

The GM spot for the Pistons has been vacant since the team overhauled its front office two years ago. Stan Van Gundy had been the team's coach and team president, with Jeff Bower serving as GM. After the Pistons moved on from Van Gundy in 2018, Stefanski took over the front office and Dwane Casey became the coach.

Detroit hired Malik Rose as an assistant general manager in 2018, but there has been no official GM.

The Pistons made the playoffs last season but were 20-46 in 2019-20 when the season was suspended because of the coronavirus. ***(AP/ESPN)***

McIlroy hopes for Ryder Cup postponement

MILWAUKEE—Rory McIlroy said Tuesday that the "majority of players" would like to see the Ryder Cup postponed until 2021—and his "personal hunch" is that it will be.

This is the second time that the world No. 1 has lobbied for the Ryder Cup, scheduled for Sept. 25-27 at Whistling Straits in Wisconsin, to be pushed back a year in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Previously, he said that a fan-less Ryder Cup wasn't worth hosting.

"My personal hunch is that I don't see how it is going to happen, so I don't think that it will happen," he told BBC. "I think the majority of players would l like to see it pushed back until 2021 so that they can play in front of crowds and have the atmosphere that makes the Ryder Cup so special."

"The players are the ones that make the Ryder Cup. If they are not on board with it and don't want to play, then there is no Ryder Cup. I see it being pushed until 2021, and, honestly, I think that will be the right call," he added.

After participating in the TaylorMade Driving Relief charity event earlier this month, McIlroy will return to PGA Tour competition June 11 at Colonial.

McIlroy will have his trusty caddie on the bag when he resumes his PGA Tour season.

The status of his looper, Harry Diamond, was in question because of some travel restrictions related to the coronavirus pandemic, but the Irishman will spend two weeks in quarantine in McIlroy's guest house in Florida before they make the trip to Texas for the Charles Schwab Challenge.

"We will be able to get Harry on the bag," McIlroy told BBC. "We have a guest house that he can quarantine in and make sure he does all the necessary things that he needs to do to caddie for the next few weeks."

Beginning at Colonial, McIlroy is expected to play the first three events of the upcoming season, including stops at the RBC Heritage and the Travelers Championship.

But because of the government guidelines in the U.S. and United Kingdom, what would ordinarily be a three-week journey for Diamond will instead turn into a seven-week process: 14 days of quarantine in South Florida, the three-tournament stretch, and then two more weeks of self-isolation upon arriving back home.

"Hopefully some of those rules could be lifted between now and then," McIlroy said.

Woods as captain in 2022

Professional golf generates an endless rumor mill, and even during the COVID-19 pandemic that hasn't changed.

During an interview this week with Sky Sports, Kevin Na let slip what would be the season's biggest rumor regarding the next U.S. Ryder Cup captain.

Na said his goal is to qualify for this year's U.S. Ryder Cup team and added, "and the following Ryder Cup (2022) in Italy, and I believe the captain is Tiger Woods."

Na quickly backtracked when asked to confirm that Woods will be the next captain.

"I've heard rumors. Am I starting a rumor? Sorry. Am I not supposed to say anything?" Na said. "I won't tell you who I heard them from, but it wasn't from [Woods]. It was from one of his friends."

Woods was a playing captain for last year's U.S. Presidents Cup team and is currently clinging to the eighth and final qualifying spot for this year's Ryder Cup team, which will be led by Steve Stricker.

Na, who is currently 28th on the U.S. Ryder Cup points list, will be the defending champion when play resumes on Tour next month at the Charles Schwab Challenge.

No fans good for Europe

Luke Donald believes a Ryder Cup held without spectators could give Europe the edge over the U.S.

If the Ryder Cup can go ahead as planned but spectators are unable to attend, Europe vice-captain Donald thinks it could prove to be a disadvantage to the hosts.

Asked if playing without fans present could benefit Europe, former world number No. 1 Donald told the Sky Sports Golf podcast: "It certainly could.

"Obviously, for anyone who watched the exhibition match [involving Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson, Peyton Manning and Tom Brady] last weekend and saw some live golf, there were only four players and there wasn't much energy there.

"I think players feed off the energy, especially the home team. They feed off that positive vibe and the crowd can play a big part, that's why it's always an advantage to be at home. If we were to play a Ryder Cup without any fans, then being in America it would be more favorable to the Europeans than the US team." ***(AP/NBC)***

MLB economic proposal `extremely disappointing'

\ NEW YORK (AP) — A rookie at the major league minimum would keep about 47% of his original salary this year while multimillionaire stars Mike Trout and Gerrit Cole would lose more than 77% under a sliding-scale proposal by big league teams that players found "extremely disappointing."

Major League Baseball made the proposal to the players' union on Tuesday during a digital meeting rather than the 50-50 revenue-sharing plan that owners initially approved for their negotiators on May 11, several people familiar with the plan told The Associated Press. The people spoke on condition of anonymity because details were not announced.

In addition to its reaction on the economics, the union said "the sides also remain far apart on health and safety protocols" aimed at starting the pandemic-delayed season around the Fourth of July. The sides have been grappling with how to aim for an opening day originally scheduled for March 26 but pushed back because of the new coronavirus.

"We made a proposal to the union that is completely consistent with the economic realities facing our sport," MLB said in a statement. "We look forward to a responsive proposal from the MLBPA."

Players agreed March 26 to a deal in which they would receive prorated shares of their salaries based on what percentage of each team's 162-game schedule is played. In exchange, players were guaranteed that if no games are played they would receive service time for 2020 matching what they accrued in 2019.

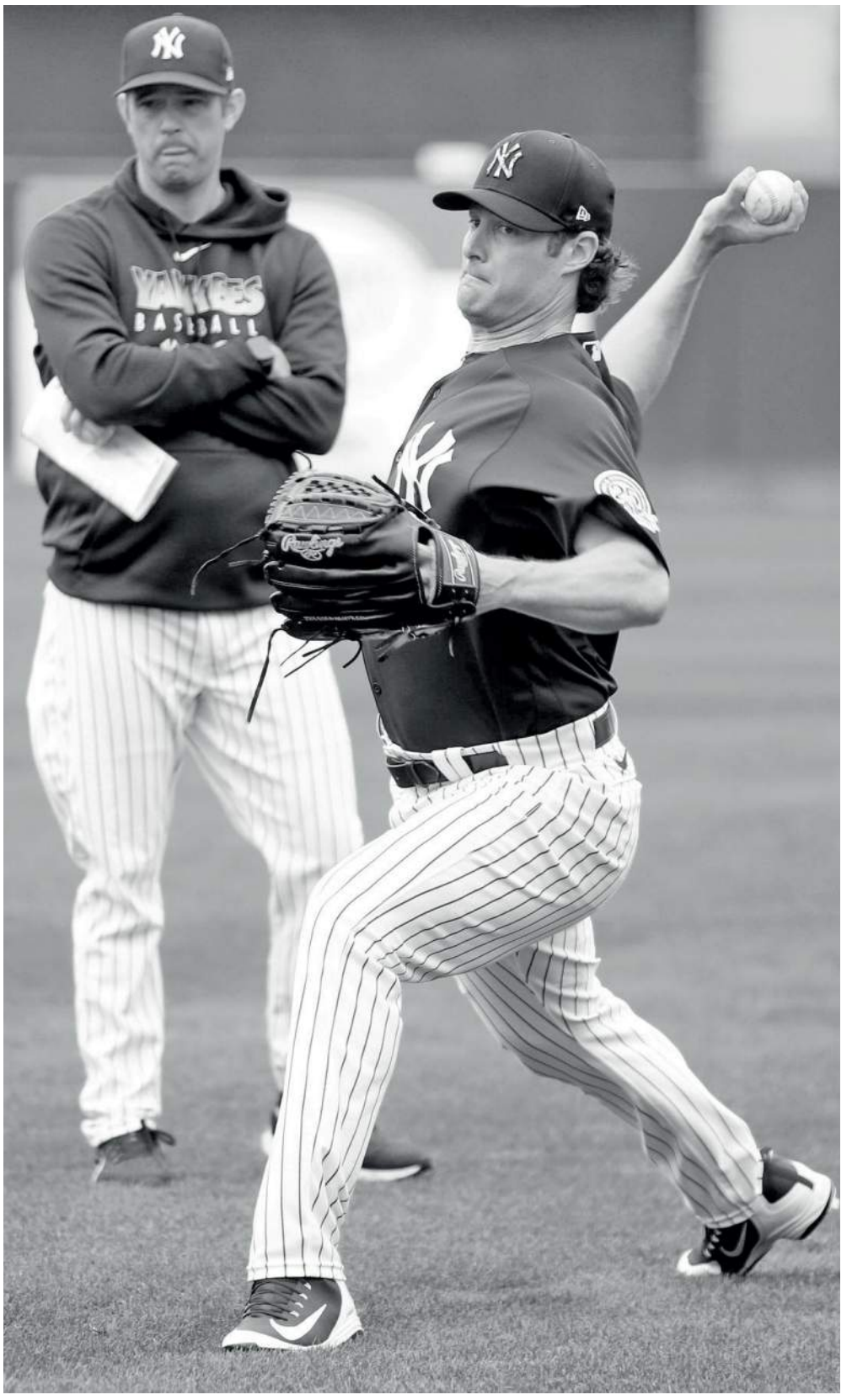
Huge losses

MLB has proposed an 82-game schedule and says the March 26 deal would result in huge losses because it did not necessarily account for a season with no fans in ballparks.

Under the plan given the union Tuesday, a player would keep 90% of his salary up to the $563,500 big league minimum, including those with lower salaries while on optional or outright assignments in the minor leagues, according to information obtained by the AP.

The amount would decrease to 72.5% from $563,501 though $1 million, to 50% from $1,000,001 through $5 million, to 40% from $5,000,001 through $10 million, to 30% from $10,000,0001 through $20 million and to 20% from $20,000,001 and up.

Each player's figure then would be prorated by the 82/162 formula agreed to in March, causing a loss of 49.4%.



AP

In this Feb. 29, 2020 file photo, New York Yankees' Gerrit Cole warms up before a spring training baseball game against the Detroit Tigers in Tampa, Fla.

There would be an additional $200 million in postseason bonus money that would be given in a higher proportion to players with larger salaries.

As a result, a player at the minimum would earn $262,217, according to calculations MLB gave the union. A $1 million salary would be cut to $434,143, $5 million to $1,642,113, $10 million to $2,947,895, $15 million to $4,049,497, $20 million to $5,151,099, $25 million to $6,048,520, $30 million to $6,945,942 and $35 million to $7,843,363.

Any performance or award bonuses earned would be received at the rate for the income level they fall in.

MLB estimates 2020 player salaries would drop from roughly $4 billion to $1.23 billion, including the postseason bonus pool.

The revenue-sharing plan earlier this month was met with immediate hostility from the union the day owners gave their negotiators the go-ahead. That plan was not presented to players when talks began the following day.

During that session, MLB gave the union a presentation claiming billions of dollars of anticipated losses and held off making an economic proposal for two weeks.

Salaries in the major leagues range from the $563,500 minimum to $36 million each for Trout, the three-time MVP outfielder on the Los Angeles Angels, and Cole, the pitcher signed by the New York Yankees as a free agent this offseason.

According to a study by the AP, 369 of 899 players have salaries of $600,000 or less, according to the rosters frozen in March.

Under MLB's proposal, the playoffs would expand from 10 teams to 14 and players would get bonus money if a complete postseason is played. Usually, salaries are earned during the regular season only and players receive money from the postseason pool, a maximum of about $382,000 last year for a full share on World Series champion Washington.

MLB told the union on May 12 it hoped to play a season in which teams would face each division rival 13 times and every club in the corresponding division in the other league six times: AL East vs. NL East, for example.

Several governors have said teams are welcome to play in their regular-season ballparks but without fans due to the new coronavirus and mandates for social distancing. MLB told the union during the May 12 presentation if teams paid players prorated salaries in a 2020 season with no fans in ballparks, the clubs would combine to have negative $3.58 billion earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization.

Many players and union leadership have said the March 26 agreement would stand and no additional salary should be given up. Tampa Bay Rays All-Star pitcher Blake Snell, the 2018 AL Cy Young Award winner, said he would not take the mound this year if his pay is cut further, proclaiming: "I'm not playing unless I get mine."

Teams are worried about being at risk if a second wave of the virus causes cancellation of the postseason, which results in MLB receiving $787 million in broadcast revenue this year.

There is room for maneuvering in the economic negotiations, but no commitment on what areas to delve into.

Longer regular season

Players could propose a longer regular season, which would result in receiving a higher percentage of their salary in the initial calculation of cuts. For instance, increasing to 94 games would reduce the initial cut from 49.4% to 42%. That could be accomplished by adding a week, inserting a few additional doubleheaders and eliminating a couple of off days.

In addition, the sides could start to address next offseason's market for spending on free agents and players eligible for arbitration. The union could propose suspending the luxury tax for 2020 and 2021, which in theory would give the higher-revenue teams more money to spend, and eliminating the loss of amateur draft picks for clubs signing qualified free agents.

Lower-revenue clubs would want something in return. One possibility would be to give them additional competitive balance-round picks in amateur drafts, where a pick in the 42-52 range overall yields prospects with slot values of $1.4 million to $1.8 million who have a better chance historically of becoming big leaguers.

As protection to teams against a lost postseason, salaries could be deferred with interest.

World TeamTennis to allow up to 500 fans at matches

WEST VIRGINIA—World TeamTennis, an innovative mixed-gender professional tennis league, will start from July 5 at the Greenbrier and up to 500 fans will be allowed to attend matches during its three-week season, tournament organizers said on Tuesday.

WTT said it would adhere to all health and safety protocols required by authorities to ensure the well-being of its players, coaches and essential staff amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The league says they will conduct the necessary testing and screening of all participants. Personal protective equipment will also be provided to all parties.

Grand Slam champions Sofia Kenin and Sloane Stephens are set to take part in the event, which will consist of a 63-match regular season followed by the playoffs.

WTT plans to stage at least three matches per day at the Greenbrier's 2,500-seat outdoor stadium, while an indoor court will be installed for back-up.

"The overwhelming feedback from our players is that they want to play WTT and are comfortable in doing so in a safe environment, which is our number one priority," WTT CEO Carlos Silva said.

The WTT also said it is increasing prize money to a record $5 million, with an added $1 million awarded in WTT Playoffs compensation.

All matches will be televised or streamed live on CBS, CBS Sports Network, Tennis Channel and ESPN+, tournament organizers said.

World Team Tennis has nine franchises across the United States. The Washington Kastles have won six WTT titles with their most recent coming in 2015.

Tennis's top professional tours, the men's ATP and women's WTA, have been shut down since March 8 due to the novel coronavirus outbreak.

Tournaments in the United States and Germany have since taken place with strict social distancing measures and no fans in attendance.

New Zealand will stage a team-based tennis tournament for local-based men's players from June 3 while world number one Novak Djokovic has organized a tournament across the Balkans from June 13-July 5. ***(NBC)***

Ramsey won't skip Rams camp; deal 'will get handled'

LOS ANGELES (AP) Jalen Ramsey says he will definitely report to training camp with the Los Angeles Rams for the final year of his rookie contract.

And while he didn't confirm how he'll get there, Ramsey probably won't feel the need to show up in an armored bank truck this time.

The Rams have said they realize Ramsey deserves to be one of the NFL's highest-paid cornerbacks ever since they acquired him from Jacksonville last season.

In turn, Ramsey has done everything possible to be worthy of a megadeal, receiving his third Pro Bowl nod last fall before earning his coaches' trust and praise during the current offseason.

It all adds up to strong optimism on both sides while Ramsey's representatives work on his long-term deal with the Rams.

"It will get handled," Ramsey said Tuesday in a video conference call.

"The Rams know where I stand, and that's all that matters," he added. "They've been in contact with my agent. They're on the same page. They know what's up. I know what's up. ... Everybody knew what type of situation it was going to be once they traded for me. I think it doesn't need to be talked about that much. It'll get handled."

Rather than going after his next contract with the passion that prompted him to show up at Jaguars camp last fall in a bank truck, Ramsey is spending more time working on his burgeoning bond with new Rams defensive coordinator Brandon Staley.

Rather than isolating Ramsey as a seldom-targeted shutdown corner, Staley indicated last week that the former Florida State safety could play all over the secondary for Los Angeles next season.

Ramsey doesn't want to give away the Rams' plans, but he's up for the challenges ahead.

"I'm very excited about the way I'm going to be utilized in this defense," Ramsey said. "I'll leave it at that. I think my talents will be shown thoroughly."

Ramsey didn't get his big contract from the Jaguars, who drafted him in 2016 and watched him become an All-Pro a year later. After his tongue-in-cheek armored truck stunt didn't work, he requested a trade several weeks later.

Ramsey's clashes with Tom Coughlin and the Jags' front office are only a bad memory now. The Rams have nothing but praise for their defensive centerpiece alongside Aaron Donald, and they seem eager to lock up the long-term future of a player who cost them two first-round draft picks in the trade.

Byron Jones became the NFL's highest-paid cornerback in March when he agreed to a five-year, $82.5 million deal including $57 million guaranteed with the Miami Dolphins. Ramsey's deal likely will eclipse Jones' contract, and the Rams aren't shy about making big commitments: general manager Les Snead has recently re-signed players to the biggest contracts ever given to a quarterback, a running back and a defensive player.

"There's a lot of dialogue" between Ramsey's agents and the Rams, coach Sean McVay said.

"What I can speak on is how impressed I've been with Jalen, the leadership I'm watching him take from afar," McVay said. "When he came in, I was so impressed with him at first. But now you're actually able to have a foundation ... and this is a really impressive guy. You really get a feel for his football acumen, and how much he's able to understand and absorb."

Ramsey has already formed a solid bond with Staley, the Rams' rookie coordinator. They're speaking over the phone about three times per day, and Staley is eagerly exploring new ways to use Ramsey's talents.

"I love coaching this guy," Staley said last week. "One of the unique parts about this whole thing is the relationship that I've been able to form with him in a short time. This guy has been really, really fun to work with. He's got a high capacity to learn, he's got a high capacity to lead. This game means a lot to him. His craft, his focus, his commitment, I couldn't be more impressed with this guy."

Meanwhile, Minkah Fitzpatrick is missing the somewhat leisurely pace of the NFL's organized team activities, when free time in the evenings allows teammates to develop the chemistry the Steelers safety considers critical to success.

"You're learning about each other and how each other think and life outside of football," Fitzpatrick said Tuesday.

Not so much this season, at least not in the way Fitzpatrick is used to. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced Fitzpatrick to work out on his own. It's limited his interactions with other members of one of the league's top secondaries to group chats and virtual conference calls. It's not ideal, but these aren't ideal times.

While Fitzpatrick is preparing as if the Steelers will report to St. Vincent College for the 55th straight summer for training camp in July, that's more pragmatism than optimism. The way the third-year All-Pro figures it, if he's ready for the grind of camp then he'll be overly prepared if camp is scrapped or the preseason is altered in response to the coronavirus.

If the NFL does tinker with the schedule, Pittsburgh might be one of the least impacted clubs in the league. The Steelers return 10 of 11 starters to a unit that finished fifth last season -- and was the primary reason Pittsburgh hung around the playoff picture until late December despite losing quarterback Ben Roethlisberger to a right elbow injury at halftime of Week 2.

"We have some young faces and new faces, (but) some teams, half their roster, half their secondary or half their linebackers are gone," Fitzpatrick said. "(A shortened preseason) will definitely give us an advantage because we all have a year (together) under our belt or more than that. I think it's more of an advantage."

GYM

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much too soon, your chances of getting injured will go up," Delos Santos said.

"Unless you've been able to navigate around zero equipment and train with the same amount of effort, it's fair to say there will be small losses in muscle and strength. Don't freak out, though. It won't take long for those positive adaptations to occur. So, don't go on a highly restrictive protocol as a means to jumpstart," he added.

The Gold's Gym personal trainer and graduate of Kinesiology and Rehabilitation Science at the University of Hawaii-Manoa also said protein is key.

"This is a no brainer: the chief ingredient for improvements in body composition has always been protein," De Los Santos said.

Gold's Gym reopens June 1

After nearly two months of suspending its operations, Gold's Gym will reopen its door to clients on June 1, according to assistant manager Natalie Cruz.

Social distancing rule will be strictly implemented, as Gold Gym's has rearranged the setup of its equipment and activity areas to adhere to the safety guidelines.

Those attending group classes or working out with personal trainers are advised to get in touch with their mentors for scheduling as slots in classes may be limited along with the hours of activities.

Operation hours are from 5:30am to 9pm from Monday to Friday and from 7am to 7pm every Saturday and Sunday.

Latte Built Oleai is open

Another health and fitness facility on island, Latte Built, has resumed its operations yesterday, but only at its Oleai branch.

Latte Built receptionist Rosa Litulumar said they are only accepting 10 people for every one hour of session to observe the social distancing rules. She recommended that visitors, whether regular member or newcomers, sign up with their App or make a call first for easier access to schedule.

WIN

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the 65th minute of the 92-minute match (including two minutes of stoppage time), leaving Macau more room to equalize or even retake the lead to save its wounded pride.

GUAM FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

The starting 11 of the CNMI poses for a photo before their game against Macau in the Preliminary Round 1 of the 2015 EAFF East Asian Cup at the Guam Football Association Training Center last July 23, 2014.

However, the Blue Ayuyus showed poise in the remaining minutes of the thrilling game, as every player on the team, including those sitting on the bench, the coaching staff, and even the supporters who traveled to Guam, did their share in keeping the momentum to the CNMI side.

Schuler said that with all those efforts from everyone he felt like they were never more deserving of the win than that day.

"Everyone on the team fought for survival after we took the lead," Schuler said.

"Everyone was tired, but kept on hustling, standing up against Macau's attackers," Barry added.

The players were so exhausted that after the referee blew the final whistle some of them fell on their knees before eventually joining their teammates in celebrating the significant win.

GUAM FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

The CNMI's Trey Dunn falls after reaching in to steal possession from a Macau player while his teammate Lucas Knecht stays close in the play.

GUAM FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Northern Mariana Islands Football Association president Jerry Tan hugs Kirk Schuler after the CNMI pulled off an an upset over Macau.

Cuban pitches idea for NBA play-in tournament

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Monumental effort equals historic win

GUAM FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

In this July 23, 2014 file photo, players of the CNMI Men's National Team celebrate after beating Macau, 2-1, in the Preliminary Round 1 of the 2015 EAFF East Asian Cup at the Guam Football Association Training Center.

GUAM FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

The CNMI's Lucas Knecht hustles for the ball during their game against Macau.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Trey Dunn lagged behind, catching his breath while holding on to his wobbling knees, as he tried to fight off fatigue. Lucas Knecht came up to him and egged him to soldier on as their opponents were making a comeback.

Earlier, Jonathan Takano went for an attack, but lost possession as he was greeted by a phalanx of defenders, bringing more frustrations on the team that has made repeated attempts to hit the board but to no avail.

Meanwhile, Bo Barry could hear from his back goal- ie Johann Noetzel yelling and telling them to keep the pressure up while the latter was also busy diving for the save one after another.

All these incidents happened in the Preliminary Round 1 of the 2015 EAFF East Asian Cup at the Guam Football Association Training Centre on July 23, 2014, as recalled by former members of the CNMI Men's National Team that battled Macau in what turned out to be a historic game for the Commonwealth.

The Blue Ayuyus pulled off a 2-1 victory against Macau, giving the men's team its first win in an international tournament.

Takano, Barry, Dunn, Knecht, and Kirk Schuler appeared on Episode 2 of *Footcast with Norman* last weekend and reflected on the high and lows that led to that signature victory.

"It took a monumental effort from all of us on the team to beat Macau," said Schuler, who delivered the dagger to complete the upset.

Schuler connected on a diving header off a feed from Takano, whose persistence on offense was greatly rewarded by the former's game-winner. Team captain Nick Swaim scored the earlier goal for the CNMI to equalize the match.

"We've been playing defense 90%, but coach Seki kept on telling us to look for that opportunities to score. I tried and kept on trying. Until now, I still get goosebumps every time I think about how I got the ball to Kirk and he made that unbelievable shot.

Schuler hit the go-ahead in

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Gym comeback: Don't do too much too soon

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Itching to get back to the gym after a long break due to the coronavirus pandemic?

Go ahead, but take it slow.

With the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force easing restrictions on the operations of various establishments on island, including allowing the reopening of gyms, *Saipan Tribune* columnist and certified trainer Dre Delos Santos understands people's desire to make up for lost ground. However, he cautioned them from going overboard too early and growing impatient while waiting for results.

"After a long lay-off, be judicious about your workload. Gradually increase the intensity of your training instead of going straight into what you were doing prior to the lockdown. If you try to bite off more than you can chew, or more accurately, do too

See GYM on Page 19

KRIZEL TUAZON

Gold's Gym Saipan will resume operations on June 1 after nearly two months of closing its door to the public due to the coronavirus pandemic.